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NARRATIVE

OF THE RESIDENCE

OF THE

PERSIAN PRINCES IN LONDON,

IN 1835 AND 1836,

WITH

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a

AN ACCOUNT OF THEIR

JOURNEY FROM PERSIA,

AND SUBSEQUENT ADVENTURES.

By JAMES BAILLIE FRASER, Esq.

AUTHOR OF "TRAVELS IN KHORASAN," "THE KUZZILBASH,"
"THE PERSIAN ADVENTURER," &c.

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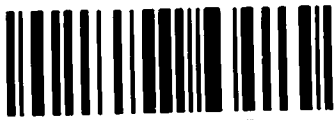

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE LORD VISCOUNT PALMERSTON,

&c. &c. &c.

34, Devonshire-place, 25th Dec. 1837.

My Lord,

To your Lordship, whose benevolence and kind attention provided so liberally for the comfort of the "Persian Princes" during their stay in London, as well as on their return to the Asylum of their choice, and towards whom they never ceased to express their deep gratitude and respect, I beg permission to inscribe this slight account of their residence in England, and their journey to Constantinople.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's very faithful

Humble servant,

James B. Fraser.

PREFACE.

FEW words are necessary to explain the object of the following pages. The author conceived that some account of the residence in England of the first Persian—in truth, the first *Asiatic* Princes, who ever visited this country—was due to the British public whose guests these Princes were; and especially to that portion of it who took so lively an interest in their history and their fate. And on whom could the task of giving it fall, but on him who was intrusted with the charge of providing for their comfort while here, and of escorting them hence, on their return to the asylum they had chosen?

In executing this task he has kept two objects in view; the first, to give, in plain and simple language, the *truth*, and nothing but the truth

— to exhibit his Royal charges in their real characters, and to explain, as well as he could, their feelings at all they saw, or heard, or experienced in this country; the second, to avoid as much as possible fatiguing his readers by the never-ending repetition of question and answer, and sentiments and compliments, which the incidents and engagements of every day gave rise to, without slurring over facts or expressions calculated to promote his primary object This, he can assure his readers, was no easy matter; for want of language on their part, in debarring them from free intercourse with others, prevented alike the utterance of many of those originalities of thought which give zest to the conversation of interesting strangers, and the occurrence of those whimsical mistakes and absurd coincidences, which sometimes may really happen, but are more often wittily imagined for persons in their circumstances; so that, in fact, their life and conversation were marked by more of monotony than excitement.

NARRATIVE OF THE

PERSIAN PRINCES IN LONDON.

DEAR——, London, 1836.

I DO not wonder that you are amused at the new and singular duty which has lately fallen to my share; and, as it is very natural that you should wish to hear all about it, and to know who my charges really are, it will give me much pleasure to introduce you to these royal personages,—for such, and no less, by birth and parentage they are. But in order that you may understand the nature of their present situation, and their motive for embarking in an undertaking so extraordinary in the eyes of a Persian and a Prince, as that of a journey to England, I must commence by giving you a slight sketch of the political condition of the country which they have been forced to abandon.

Futeh Allee Shah, the late king of Persia, had, as you are aware, the largest family of children perhaps that ever was born to man. What number of wives he had is a point on which curiosity cannot, I fear, be satisfied; for not only were they subject to death like other women, in which case the vacancies were speedily replaced, but his majesty was in the habit of making frequent changes in the rose-garden of his harem, occasionally weeding out those flowers which withered or lost their loveliness, and not seldom bestowing such superannuated fair ones as marks of his especial regard upon certain of his favourite officers, who were forced to pay pretty handsomely for the faded sweets. Those ladies who brought him sons he seldom abandoned or lost sight of. The moment it was known that any of his wives had become the mother of a male infant, a superior establishment was immediately allotted to her, and she entered at once into the enjoyment of a weight and influence which was denied to those who had the ill luck to produce only children of their own sex. But the king's passion was variety, and, as he made a rule of

marrying after a fashion every female to whom he took a fancy, you may conceive that the number of his wives amounted to a pretty high figure.

There are, as perhaps you may have heard, two sorts of Mahometan marriages. Of the wives espoused after the first of these fashions, and who are called *Ahdee*, men are limited to four, and with these the contract is for life, unless dissolved by a regular and formal divorce. Those wedded after the second form are called *Mootah*, and with them the contract endures for any period agreed upon between the parties,—years, months, weeks, days, or even hours,—after the lapse of which they may separate, or renew the union, just as they think fit. Of these Mootahs the number is unrestricted, nor is the connexion considered at all disreputable; all the parties have to do, in order to preserve respectability, is to adhere to their contract while it lasts.

In the families of great men, who can maintain many wives, this description of marriage is resorted to as the means of increasing their harem, and their chance of legitimate progeny;

and thus many of their favourite sons are born of their Mootah wives. The greater number of the children of Futeh Allee Shah were necessarily born of mothers so circumstanced; and it is affirmed that, of wives of both classes, he generally maintained in his harem from eight hundred to one thousand. Even at the time of his death the number it contained is said to have been between seven and eight hundred.

Of this goodly collection were born to him, first and last, from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and thirty sons, and about a hundred and fifty daughters; a fair progeny, which, inheriting all the procreative zeal and ambition of their august sire, and being early indulged with the means of gratifying them, the royal race increased with such prodigious rapidity, that at the time of his majesty's death, had his descendants been all gathered together, he would have seen, it is said, a tribe of full five thousand souls, men, women, and children, clustering around his throne.

Such singular fœcundity, however desirable in patriarchal ages, when men were wanted to increase the strength of a wandering tribe,

proved anything but a blessing either to the sire or to the country of this numerous offspring. The latter years of the former were disturbed and embittered by the quarrels of his sons, by their profligacy, and their more than questionable loyalty; while the country was eaten up, and the people impoverished, by their rapacious profusion. Each province, every considerable district and town, nay almost every village of more than ordinary size, had its "Shahzadeh," or Prince, with his court on a greater or less scale, oppressing his handful of miserable Ryots, till at length so completely did these royal leeches exhaust the resources of the kingdom, that very little, comparatively speaking, of its lawful revenues reached the Shah's treasury.

But this was not all. The crown of Persia has at all times been the property of the sharpest sword and strongest arm; and each of these petty kings, conceiving himself the fittest to succeed his father or grandfather, sought by all possible means, however flagitious, to strengthen himself for the struggle which all contemplated at the death of the reigning sovereign, so that

the seeds of innumerable and interminable civil wars were sown throughout the land.

To provide, so far as human foresight might avail, against a result so ruinous upon the king's demise, his majesty, who claims the privilege of naming his successor, however little that nomination may be respected after his death, was prevailed upon to declare his second, but noblest-born son, Abbâs Meerza, as heir to his crown and kingdom; and the principal powers in alliance with his majesty not only acknowledged this choice, but declared that they would support the will of their august ally, so far as might be in their power.

This disposition was unfortunately rendered void by the death of Abbâs Meerza; but his majesty was again prevailed upon to nominate Mahomed Meerza, eldest son of the deceased heir apparent, in the room of his father, as successor to the throne; and this new choice was in like manner recognised and guaranteed by both Great Britain and Russia. Unfortunately for themselves, however, neither the uncles nor cousins of the intended heir, that is, the sons and grandsons of the Shah, would nor did acqui-

esce in the decision of their sovereign and father. On the contrary, they openly declared that they never would bow the head to a boy; and each, avowing his intentions to strike for the throne, collected his resources and prepared his strength for the impending conflict.

Accordingly, when Futeh Allee Shah resigned his crown and life in October 1835, a variety of competitors started for the former. Among them however, besides Mahomed Meerza, the legitimate heir, three alone were at all formidable. These were, first, the *Zil-e-Sultaun,* full brother to the late Abbâs Meerza, and consequently full uncle to the heir apparent: secondly, Hoossein Allee Meerza, the Firmaun Firmaee, or Governor General of the important province of Fars: and thirdly, Hassan Allee Meerza, full brother of the last, who had once been governor of Khorasan, and afterwards of Kerman, from which he had been expelled for misconduct by the late Abbâs Meerza, with the Shah's permission.

The Zil-e-Sultaun was a man deficient in every requisite for command, and formidable only from being governor of the ark or citadel of Tehran, in which were deposited the treasures

of the sovereign. Hoossein Allee Meerza was powerful from being in possession of the resources of Fars, which province commands the whole south of Persia; but he was a man of weak intellect and irresolute mind, and his family had moreover rendered themselves obnoxious to many of the nobles of the province by acts of oppression and tyranny. The three princes now in England, and whom I shall presently describe to you, are the sons of this same Hoossein Allee Meerza.

His brother, Hassan Allee Meerza, was a man of more ability and strength of mind; and the popularity which he had acquired throughout a large part of the kingdom by a reputation for liberality and courage, would have rendered him the most dangerous rival of all to the legitimate heir, had not these advantages been neutralized by an imprudence and rashness which lost him the confidence of his father, and reduced him to a sort of dependence upon his brother the Firmaun Firmaee. His superior boldness and decision of character, however, enabled him to exercise a powerful influence over his brother; and, in opposing the claims of Mahomed Meerza, they acted in perfect co-operation.

When the last-named prince, who ought now to be called Mahomed Shah, supported by the solid aid of England, and the countenance of Russia, marched from Tabreez towards Tehran, the weak pretenders, who had for a moment affected a show of royalty in their own little domains, began to discover their error, and, as Khans and nobles came rallying round the sovereign, whom they saw it was in vain to oppose, these also, one by one, sought to secure indulgence by a timely submission. The Zil-e-Sultaun, however, who had crowned himself in the capital by the title of Allee Shah, still held out, and lavished money from the treasury to raise troops and secure the fidelity of his followers.

On the advance of his nephew, he sent him a letter, conceived in sufficiently arrogant terms, setting forth, that it had been the will of God to place the crown of Persia upon his head; and, as the kingdom could only endure one monarch, he summoned Mahomed Meerza, as his nephew and subject, to come to the presence, and tender his homage, and, in return, to accept from the royal favour the government of his deceased

father, namely, the province of Azerbijan. This letter was followed up by an army led by Imaum Verdee Meerza, another son of the late king. But the result was very different from the expectations of its master, for the troops, dismayed at the imposing appearance of the Azerbijan force, led on by its English officers, and enjoying the countenance of the English and Russian missions, and probably at heart not over warm in the cause of their employer, deserted to join the royal standard, in such numbers that their leader Imaum Verdee Meerza himself was fain to follow their example, and, repairing to the presence of the young king, to sue for pardon. In fact, the march of the royal army from Casveen to the capital was a triumphal progress. Opposition had disappeared; and the unfortunate Zil-e-Sultaun, unable either to fight or flee, was forced to surrender at discretion.

But the discomfiture of other aspirants did not by any means so intimidate the ruler of Fars and his ambitious brother as to induce them to withdraw their opposition. On the contrary, the Firmaun Firmaee, who had been in attendance upon his father at Ispahan until

a few days before the old man's decease, on his return to Sherauz, had himself crowned by the title of Hoossein Shah, assumed the ensigns of royalty, and began to levy troops with all his might to support his pretensions. He was supported in this rebellious course by the Ameen-u-Dowlut, chief minister of the late king, who on this occasion certainly betrayed his trust, and acted an unprincipled as well as a dishonest and imprudent part, knowing, as he did, the will of his deceased master, and how that will would surely be supported.

The consequence of this conduct on the part of the Ameen-u-Dowlut, together with that of a celebrated religious character Hadjee Seyed Mahomed Baukher, the Sheikh-ul-Islam, and head of the priesthood in Ispahan, was as disastrous as possible to that city. Deserted by the authorities that ought to have maintained good order, the *Looties*, that is, the "swell mob," the great concourse of vagabonds and thieves who are to be found in abundance in every large Persian city, as well as in those of other countries, commenced a systematic course of plunder, in which they were aided and abetted by

the above-mentioned Sheikh-ul-Islam, who, though enjoying a reputation for sanctity which rendered him all-powerful at Ispahan, and a most dangerous opponent to any reigning monarch, was at heart not only a most ambitious, but a thoroughly unprincipled person. He was the receiver of the lion's share of the stolen goods; and the thieves under his protection made their chief depôt for plunder in the principal mosque, where they enjoyed a perfect security. So complete was the rule of anarchy and outrage in this once great capital of Persia, that all safety of person and of property was at an end; houses were forcibly entered, and women and goods carried off openly by these wretches, much as in a town given up to plunder, so that all honest men that could do so fled from the scene of confusion and crime.

To rescue the city from this deplorable condition was a matter not less important than to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Firmaun Firmaee, who, according to information received from Fars, had despatched an army headed by his brother Hassan Allee Meerza, and five or six of his sons and other princes, to

seize upon the place. This service was confided by the young Shah to the care of Sir Henry Bethune Lindsay, who, as you are aware, had been sent out about a twelvemonth before, to assist in re-organizing the army, particularly the artillery of the Shah, and who had borne a very conspicuous part in the military transactions which had secured the throne to Mahomed Shah.

Sir Henry marched from Tehran in February, at the head of not more than four thousand men, of whom some five hundred were cavalry, and with fourteen guns. On reaching a village on the low road between seventy and eighty miles distant from Ispahan, it was confidently reported that the army of the Firmaun Firmaee had advanced within a few days' journey of that city; upon which, with characteristic promptitude, he made a forced march, which in about thirty hours brought him to the outskirts of the place; a performance with infantry almost, if not wholly, unprecedented, and which reflects equal credit on the troops for their willingness and powers of endurance, as on the zeal and decision of their commander. At his approach the Loo-

ties and plunderers disappeared, order was instantly restored, and Ispahan was saved.

Scarcely, however, had Sir Henry and his little army reposed for a few days in the rescued city, when authentic information was received of the near approach of the army of Fars. Fully aware of the importance of promptitude, he determined on an immediate movement, without waiting for the succours which were promised him; and disregarding the entreaties of those who would have fain persuaded him to wait, if but for a single day, until even one more regiment should arrive, he beat his drums at once, and in an hour after was in full march towards Komaishah, in the neighbourhood of which place it was supposed the enemy would be found.

It appeared, however, that the troops of Fars, which consisted chiefly of cavalry, desirous to avoid a collision with the royal army, and in hopes of being able to surprise the city, had taken a road leading further among the mountains than that which Sir Henry had chosen, which was the usual high-road. On learning this, by a rapid and clever manœuvre, he led

his troops across the dry bed of a river, and, cutting off their route, met them face to face not far from the village of Isferaeen.

Hassan Allee Meerza, who, it appears, commanded in person, thus forced to fight or flee, took the former part, and divided his cavalry into five *dustehs*, or bodies, so placed as to support one another. His *serbâz*, or regular infantry, amounting only to about eight hundred men, he posted behind an old garden wall, in order to check by their fire the advance of the king's troops as they should move forwards to the attack. But Sir Henry was a better tactician than they dreamt of, and, instead of marching up so as to be shot at coolly from behind a wall, he halted his artillery, reinforced by six guns from Ispahan, at a convenient distance, and, opening its fire upon the said wall, knocked it down in a trice, together with a good many of the poor serbaüz behind it. The cavalry, startled by the fate of the regular infantry, made but a faint show of resistance; and, on receiving a few rounds from the well-served guns, they fled, and scattered all over the country; and so complete was the rout, that it is said their

commander, Hassan Allee Meerza, together with his brother and nephew, princes, could scarcely muster fifty horsemen to attend them in their flight. The serbauz were all made prisoners, and the camp equipage with the whole of the baggage taken; and had Sir H. Bethune possessed more cavalry, the slaughter, if not the rout, would have been much greater, for there was no want of will to slay; as it was, the killed on the part of the enemy did not, I believe, exceed a hundred men, while of the Shah's troops there were only a few wounded.

Sir Henry, intent to profit by his victory, pursued his way at once towards Sheerauz, followed by the *Moatimud-u-Dowlut*, Manoocheher Khan, a Georgian eunuch in great favour with the late king, who had been appointed to take the command in Fars, and who had entered Ispahan on his way thither, with a considerable army, after Sir Henry had left it. It appears that the efforts of the Firmaun Firmaee had been very much paralyzed by the defeat of his troops near Komaishah, and that not only were his own resources inadequate to meet the strug-

gle he had rushed into, but that his influence with the powerful chiefs of his country, who might have aided him effectually, was at too low an ebb to admit of much reliance being placed on their assistance. It was only a short time before, that he had caused Mahomed Allee Khan, a nobleman who from his influence among the wandering tribes had been created *Eel-Khânee*, or Lord of the Eeleauts, to be seized and imprisoned; and, although life and limb were spared, the Khan was not released until he had disbursed large sums of money; after which, "à la mode de Perse," they gave him a dress of honour, and sent him back to his country and his tribes again. But though those who have been outraged by a king or prince may, while he continues powerful and prosperous, conceal the wounds inflicted on their pride, it is not to be imagined that these wounds do not rankle in secret; nor that, should opportunity occur, the injured parties will be slow to wreak their vengeance on the oppressor. The Eel-Khânee, summoned to Sheerauz on this occasion, with his contingent of troops, came indeed, and entered the city;

but it was not to aid its distressed prince; it was to watch his time, and to betray the man who had injured him so deeply.

Another misfortune for the Firmaun Firmaee was, that even the *serbauz*, or regular infantry, which he possessed, were deprived at this critical period of their only efficient leader. They had been drilled and commanded by a British officer, who had once been similarly employed by the celebrated Daood Pashah of Baghdad. This person, who had for some time been suffering from illness, died just before the march of the Fars troops against Ispahan. It was whispered that he had been put out of the way by order of the Firmaun Firmaee, in consequence of a refusal to march in command of troops that were intended to act against the cause supported by his own country and government: but this I do not believe; for whether he did or did not refuse to march against Mahomed Shah, the state of disease under which he had long been labouring, and which had been exacerbated, if not entirely induced, by his own unfortunate habits, was sufficient to account for

the fact of his death, without imputing to his employers the needless guilt of murder.

While the Firmaun Firmaee was thus preparing for so important a struggle, he summoned round him as a matter of course all his sons, and those relatives on whom he thought he could most confidently rely. Among these were the three princes now in England, Reza Koolee Meerza, Nejeff Koolee Meerza, and Timour Meerza. Of these, Reza Koolee Meerza, his eldest son, born of his first and most esteemed wife, is the principal in dignity, as in years. Far excelling his weak father in ability and discretion, the executive administration of the province was chiefly vested in him. In the words he has more than once made use of to me himself in speaking of this subject, "The title was with my father—the rule with me." He is now about thirty-two years of age, tall, and of a very pleasing countenance; a man of very amiable dispositions, gentlemanly feelings and manners; a great deal of innate dignity of character, which evinces itself in his general deportment and conduct, and a shrinking and almost morbid

sensitiveness to all that, in his opinion, may tend to affect his good name, or lessen him in public estimation; in fact, a repugnance to public exposure of any sort. The title bestowed by the late Shah upon this prince, for almost all of them have such titles, was that of *Naib-ool-Mooluk*, Lieutenant or Vice-Governor of the country.

Nejeff Koolee Meerza, the second in years of the three, being born of a Georgian lady, who was of course a slave, is in that respect inferior in rank to his elder brother, but takes precedence of the younger, though more nobly born, Timour Meerza, probably by courtesy and tacit consent. He had been made governor too, at an early age, of the distant and important district of Bebahan, or Koh-e-Geeloo, an office of trust, which increased his personal consequence, and for which, according to the fashion of Persian governors, his natural abilities appear to qualify him well. He is of a small and slender person: his light hair, blue eyes, and peculiar features announce his Georgian blood; while the disadvantage of extreme short-sightedness, and the long beard which, unlike his brothers, he

cherishes with care, unite with a natural shyness of disposition to render his appearance and address less agreeable than those of his brothers, and tinge them with an awkward uncouthness. In truth, his manners are less gentle than those of his elder brother, and want the open frankness of those of the younger; and a rough deep voice increases the unfavourable impression which a first introduction may sometimes produce. Yet this ungainly exterior covers more talent and learning than is possessed by either of the others; the *Wali*, for such is this prince's title, which signifies *Prince*, or Chief, is shrewd and intelligent, well versed in the learning and accomplishments of his own country, a keen observer, an acute reasoner, with a decidedly intriguing and diplomatic turn, and a general force of character which has given great weight to his opinion with his brothers. The Wali is always set forward as the negotiator, where such is required; and, though the greatest deference is paid to the orders and wishes of the elder prince, I have observed that he never comes to any decision on matters of consequence without consulting the Wali. Yet this force of

mind is mingled in a very curious manner with a simplicity which appears wholly at variance with the rest of his character; and I frequently remarked a timidity and irresolution in some things, generally trifles, amounting even to childishness, which was wholly irreconcileable with the natural vigour, I had almost said relentlessness, which often marked his character. For the rest, he is one of those strict religionists who affect a little of the dervish, or ascetic; although, judging from his unrestrained enjoyment of the good things of this world at times, his philosophy does not appear to have produced a very regulating effect on his conduct. Taciturn and morose as he might appear to strangers, he enjoyed himself much in private society, and there was none who loved their joke or their bon-môt to season a good glass of wine more than the Wali. I have seen him uproarious in his mirth, and, what might appear still less in keeping with his character, melted occasionally into very sincere fits of sensibility.

The third, Timour Meerza, is very different from both his brothers. He is by the same mother as the eldest, but five or six years

younger; that is, from twenty-six to twenty-eight years of age. Tall and slender, yet muscular and perfectly well made, his carriage and deportment declare at once his character, which is that of a fearless, reckless, joyous young soldier, caring little for anything that has not reference to hunting or to arms, or social and not very temperate enjoyment. Horses, dogs, hawks, guns, swords, and pistols are his passion; to which may be added,—no uncommon thing in youth,—a warm admiration of female beauty, and delight in parties of pleasure and those feasts where the wine-cup circulates freely. He is just the creature to echo from his heart the characteristic wish of the *yerremmâses*, or reckless dare-alls of his country, who declare that all they desire in this world is a good horse, a sharp sword, a "cypress waist," and a stoop of wine. Yet this reckless exterior covers excellent natural endowments and dispositions, which a better education, for he appears to have been a spoiled child from his youth, would have turned to very valuable account. He is blessed with a fine temper, and a high and buoyant spirit, which, though sometimes break-

ing out into a momentary blaze of passion, renders him a cheerful animated companion, and supports not only himself, but his brothers, under their really severe reverse of fortune, and in the still more vexatious and trying, because constantly pressing, annoyances and ennui of every-day life. No one who has seen Timour Meerza in conversation can have failed to remark the beaming sunshine of his countenance, and the striking animation of his manner. His very attitudes and movements are indicative of the bold yet kindly frankness and proud independence which are the striking features of his character. Timour Meerza obtained from his grandfather the title of *Hissâm-u-Dowlut*, or the Sword of the State, which characteristic sobriquet was bestowed by the Shah upon occasion of an equally characteristic feat on the part of the prince; and, as it will serve better than any thing to give you an idea of the man, I will relate it to you here.

When Timour was but seventeen years of age, he attended the late Shah on a hunting party among the ruins of Shahpore, an ancient

city in the south of Persia, now a howling wilderness, overrun with jungle, and abounding in all sorts of game and wild animals, lions and tigers among the rest. It so happened that one of the former animals, having been started, took shelter in a thick covert, from whence beaters were sent to drive him, whilst the Shah and most of the princes awaited his appearance without, to shoot him as he should pass. Timour Meerza, however, was too much excited to remain inactive, — he dashed into the jungle with the beaters; and the consequence was, that the lion sprung out upon him, one claw fastening upon the flank of his horse and another on his own thigh, tearing them both in a desperate manner. But the young man, instead of being dismayed, with equal coolness and promptitude turned round in his saddle, and, bringing his gun to bear upon the beast, fired with such effect that it fell to the ground; on which, dismounting with equal rapidity, he cut off its head with his sword, and laid it, dripping like himself with blood, at the feet of the Shah. Soon after this he was made governor of Bushire and

the Dushtistan, a tract upon the Persian gulf, where his conduct was strongly marked by all the extremes of his character; and there he became intimate with the English resident, and several other gentlemen of this country.

LETTER II.

THE princes described in my last letter were but a small part of the royal Kajar race, who were at this time collected at Sheerauz to support the Firmaun Firmaee and his brother: for the former prince had many other sons; and not a few of his brothers, sons of the late Shah, took part in the struggle which their elder was engaged in against his nephew. This struggle was terminated sooner than the most desponding prognosticator could have predicted, loose and inefficient though the materials of the rebel party were. No sooner had the troops of Mahomed Shah, under Sir Henry Bethune, appeared before Sheerauz, and surrounded the place, than the Eel-Khânee with all his followers, who were calculated upon as its chief defenders, declared for the king, and co-operated with the enemy outside; a fact which became known to the princes within, who were occupied with preparations for defence, by their

suddenly discovering that the gates and principal points of the city were in possession of that chief's troops.

Nothing can more clearly mark the utter incapacity of those who had so rashly engaged in this dangerous enterprise, than the childish imbecility with which they appear to have fallen into this dilemma, and their total inability even to attempt escaping from it. In fact, their discomfiture would seem to have been the effect of infatuation rather than ignorance; for some of the party profess to have been on their guard, and to have raised the voice of warning in time, but all in vain. The eldest prince assured me that, long before the arrival of the Shah's army, he had urged his father not to coop himself up in the city, but to move out into some position from whence he might command his other resources, and remove again, or even fly, if necessary. But his advice was rejected, and particularly by his uncle Hassan Allee Meerza, who declared that the king's troops would never be able to make an impression upon Sheerauz; that he doubted if they would even try it; and, on the contrary, felt satisfied that, if they should

make their appearance at all, it would rather be as friends than as enemies, and willing to come to a good understanding upon fair terms: "And what could I urge," said the prince to me, "against the advice of my uncle and my elder? — yet I did remonstrate till my father got angry, and told me to hold my peace."

How Hassan Allee Meerza could permit himself to become the sport of an illusion which his own previous defeat should have dispelled, I know not; but such the prince declared to me was the case; and, unfortunately for himself, the Firmaun Firmaee was so far misled as to follow this evil counsel. The consequence was, that, hostilities without the walls being aided by treason within, the unlucky governor of Fars was taken by surprise, and knew not what to do. At the critical moment when the full extent of their misfortune was discovered, six of his sons, accompanied by certain of his brothers, repaired to the private apartments in the palace, where he was seated in helpless perplexity, and besought him to lose not a moment in flying: "Horses," they said, "and servants were in waiting." The Firmaun Firmaee, still irreso-

lute, sent them off to discover whether any of the gates were yet unoccupied by his enemies. The princes, armed and mounted as they were, departed immediately on this service, and separated into parties in order to multiply the chances of success. Reza Koolee Meerza, Timour Meerza, and their younger brother Iskunder Meerza, with a few followers, kept together. The first gate they came to was already in the hands of the Eel-Khânee's people; they galloped to another; a party were just in the act of securing it; but the man who was shutting-to the interior door was shot by the pistol of Timour Meerza before he could effect his purpose. Another, in the act of discharging his musket at Timour, was cut down by his brother Iskunder. The ball, fortunately, was arrested by three thick flaps of bread which "the Sword of the State" had caught up when leaving home, as a provision in case of accidents, and they saved his life; but one of them was displaced and fell, a loss which he sadly deplored in the sequel.

The other princes now came opportunely up, with some servants, and the gate was secured for the time. Not a moment was then lost by

Reza-Koolee Meerza in sending off his *meerachor*, or master of the stables, with a capital led-horse to his father, and an earnest request that he should mount immediately, and join them while yet he could do so. The harness of this horse was of gold, and worth a thousand tomauns, (500*l.*) and there were a thousand tomauns in gold bound upon his croupe, all of which would have been useful in case of flight; but the man got killed on the way, and horse and all were taken by the enemy. Another horse and messenger were despatched on the same errand, and still they struggled to maintain their post in hopes of their father's appearance; but at length, being overwhelmed by numbers, they were forced to give way, and, dashing forwards from the gateway, cut their way through the enemy outside, and made off at full speed to the hills, pursued by some hundreds of horsemen. The town soon fell into the hands of the king's troops; and the Firmaun Firmaee, with his brother Hassan Allee Meerza, and a number of other princes, his brothers, sons, or nephews, being made prisoners by the Eel-Khânee, were by him delivered into the hands of Sir Henry Bethune. That officer, as in duty bound, sent them all to

Tehran, to be dealt with according to the will and pleasure of their royal relative: but his majesty, with a leniency rare on such occasions in Persia, contented himself with sending them all unharmed to the state-prison at Ardebeel, except Hassan Allee Meerza; and he, being considered a peculiarly dangerous and obnoxious person, was blinded when within a few days' journey of the capital. The Firmaun Firmaee, however, never reached his destined place of confinement: worn out probably with fatigue and anxiety, his frame was unable to resist an attack of cholera morbus, which seized him on the road to Azerbijân, and which terminated his misfortunes and his life together.

The fugitive princes, being six brothers, made off, as I have said, for the hills, pursued by their enemies; but they were mounted on first-rate horses, and by degrees outstripped their pursuers; so that, before evening fell, they had reached the *Koh-e-berf*, or mountain of snow, one of their favourite hunting-grounds, and so called from the quantity of snow which lies there during the greater part of the year. Their knowledge of the ground here enabled them easily

to baffle all pursuit, and to reach a cavern among the snow in the higher parts of the mountain, where they knew themselves to be secure from future search; but it was a bitter cold night in the month of February, and they were without cloaks or coverings, or even food for themselves, nor had they a grain of corn for their horses.

The night wore away, however; but being unwilling to remain longer than necessary so near the very focus of danger, in the morning, after a minute examination of the country with their spying-glasses, they mounted and made their way among the mountains towards the celebrated *Kallah Suffeed*, or "White fortress," the abode of Mahomed Wullee Khan, chief of the Mammasenni Eeleauts; a tribe of the aboriginal inhabitants of these parts notorious for being the greatest robbers in that country of thieves and plunderers.

Perhaps you may not be aware that plundering is a profession which is held as anything rather than disgraceful among these, or, indeed, among any of the Eeleauts or nomade tribes of Persia; that is, not more so than it was by our

own ancestors of old, who, when accused of being thieves and robbers, repelled the charge with indignation, declaring that they troubled no man, but only drove their "spreach" in "the land of Moray, where every gentleman takes his pleasure." Wullee Khan, then, was just such a gentleman "reiver;" but he was moreover a chief of so much note and power, that his daughter had been thought a fit match for Timour Meerza, whose wife she had become, and thus it was natural enough that the fugitive princes should bend their way to his tents.

After a journey of two days and nights, which they made amongst the mountains, suffering much from cold and hunger, they reached his encampment at the foot of the Kallah Suffeed. There is an excellent story regarding the supposed conduct of Wullee Khan to his royal connexions and guests, which, somehow or other, has got into circulation here. It sets forth, that in defiance of the laws of hospitality, so highly regarded among the tribes, and of what was due to friends and connexions in distress, that chief stripped them of the little

property they had carried off; and that, when they remonstrated against this inhospitable outrage, and appealed to his feelings as a relative, who should rather supply their wants and protect them from harm, than rob them of the pittance they had preserved, he declared what they had stated to be the strongest possible argument for the conduct they blamed:—"It is," said he, "the very reason, my good friends, why you should be pleased at what I have done. You know that somebody must needs have the stripping of you before you reach the coast; now, would you not prefer that the property should remain in the family,—that a friend and relative should profit by it?"

The only objection to this story is, that it is not true; for, having heard it, I made a point of asking the prince whether such had been the case or not.—"Anything but that," was his royal highness's reply; "Wullee Khan received us most hospitably. When we came riding up to his tent, he was taken by surprise, and, not knowing who we were or what we wanted, snatched down his gun and his sword to defend himself in case of attack. But I waved my

hand to him and said, 'No, no, Khan, be at rest,—all that work is at an end; we come to you as fugitives and guests, not as enemies. Our state, and power of offence, are all gone alike. Here is my sword,—here are my brothers'; we have nothing but our horses and their harness, besides the clothes on our back,—take them if you please, for we cannot resist. We are perishing with cold and hunger,—do with us what you will.'

"At these words," continued the prince, "the Khan started and tore his beard, while his eyes filled with tears. 'Dust on my head!' cried he, 'what words are these?—for what do you take me? Am I a man to rob my guests and strip my own relations? On the contrary, all I have is yours;' and then he embraced us, and took us into his tent; and fed and clothed us, for our clothes were hanging in tatters; and he offered us all manner of assistance, and treated us suitably to our birth and rank. No, no, Wullee Khan is not the *ghorumsaug* (dirty scoundrel) to rob the guests who take refuge in his tent!"

Nevertheless, it appears that, even in the case

of relatives, these Mammasennis and their chief are ticklish folk to deal with, as came out in further conversation on this very subject. "After all," said Timour Meerza, in reply to some observation of mine, "this same Wullee Khan clothed and entertained us on easy terms; for it was the very bed-clothes of my own sister, and the habiliments of her attendants, that supplied our wants in his own tents."—"And how was that?" I inquired.—"Why," replied he, "a party had been sent by the Khan to escort a caravan which was returning from Kerbelah to Sheerauz, beyond the mountains, which they did accordingly: but, having performed this duty, they thought they might as well do a little business more in their own way, before returning home; so, after parting with the caravan, they just made a small detour, and galloping forwards waylaid it at a pass, and, stripping the people, left them to pursue their way as they best might. It chanced that my sister and her party were with this caravan; so, while we were passing on one side of Khoneh Zenioon, the Mammasennis were robbing the *Zea-ul-Sultunat* (his sister, the "beam of the

Empire") on the other; and, just as we reached the camp of Wullee Khan, they had brought in the plunder which served for our accommodation."

From Wullee Khan the prince received a party of some five hundred horsemen, with whom he despatched Timour Meerza back towards the neighbourhood of Sheerauz, in order to distract the attention of the king's troops and plunder the country, so as to delay the departure of his father and family with the rest of the captives, if possible, until something more effectual could be done for their liberation. Messengers were also despatched to warn the tribes of Buchtiari and Louristan to muster their forces and join his royal highness. But the Firmaun Firmaee, in reply to the letters of his sons, informing him of the steps they were taking, and the hopes they entertained of being able to retrieve his affairs, wrote them a letter which I wish it was in my power to give you at length. It contained more good sense and feeling than I imagined could have existed in the whole crasis of that prince.

It made allusion to his former palmy state, in contrast with his present fallen circumstances,

and cautioned his sons from permitting themselves to be dazzled by false hopes, which could only lead them into deeper ruin. "If I," said he, "when possessed of all Fars and its resources, a numerous army, a large treasury, and all the means and appliances of royalty which, as you know, were so lately mine, was unable to secure the throne, can you imagine that there is the smallest chance of success for you with a few hundreds, or even thousands, of needy adventurers, unprovided with money, arms, or any warlike stores, to achieve the object which I have failed in obtaining? No; it is plainly not the will of God that the kingdom should be ours, and it becomes us to submit to his omnipotent decrees. Besides, the first news of your commencing such a course as you propose, would be the signal for my death. If you will consent to be guided by me, there are just two lines of conduct for you to pursue; choose between them. If, like me, you are weary of the world, and can submit to sacrifice its pleasures and vanities, retire to Kerbelah or Najeff-Ashruff, and there lead holy and religious lives, praying for me and for yourselves. If, on

the other hand, you cannot bring yourselves to this humble and pious frame of mind, and if you have hearts bold enough to make the effort, repair to England, throw yourselves on the generosity of its sovereign, and, with your hands upon his skirt, implore his protection and assistance. The English have always been my friends, they are powerful and generous, and your appeal to them will not be made in vain."

The prince, after mature consideration, resolved to pursue the course advised by his father in this letter, which he regarded then, and still regards, as his *wussiyut-nameh*, or last will and testament; and such, indeed, it might well be held, as it was the last communication his son ever received from him. Prince Timour was recalled, and reluctantly returned to his brother at the Kallah Suffeed. But it does not appear that all warlike demonstrations were as yet completely laid aside, for the prince proceeded towards the Bebahan district to demand succours and assistance of the governor, a person who had been placed there by himself during a temporary disgrace of the Wali. But gratitude

does not appear to have been the distinguishing trait of this man's character, for he replied to the application by a message, deprecating all personal communication, accompanied by some comparatively trifling presents, which the prince indignantly returned with a letter of bitter upbraiding.

A few days after the prince's arrival at the camp of Wullee Khan, he was joined by his mother, who having made her escape from Sheerauz, in the confusion consequent on its capture, along with Solymaun Meerza, another son of the late king's, and a single servant, had followed the traces of her sons till she reached the Kallah Suffeed. From thence, when the prince, her son, quitted the camp of the Mammasenni chief and proceeded towards Bebahan, this spirited lady accompanied his party, sharing all its hardships, and exhibiting to them a signal example of courage and perseverance. From Bebahan it was resolved to make the best of their way towards the country of the Chaab Arabs, which lies on the north side of the Persian gulf towards its head, and on the mouths of the rivers that flow into it. But to reach the

low country was by no means an easy matter, for, as they advanced, they found it all in the hands of their pursuers, so that they were forced to abandon the roads and inhabited districts, and skulk from hill to hill in order to avoid captivity. In this long and devious course the hardships they endured were very great; for food frequently failed them, and they were often obliged to be content with the very precarious supplies of game which skill in the chase enabled them to procure.

At length, after encountering and conquering a thousand difficulties, they made their way to the banks of the river Zeidoon, which enters the gulf at Endian, and is the boundary of the Chaab country to the south-east. It was swelled to a prodigious size by the melting of the snow in the hills, and bridge there was none to be seen; so that, however great their desire to place this important obstacle between themselves and their pursuers, to pass appeared impossible; the very attempt was out of question. They made inquiries of a countryman regarding the means of crossing at other points; and the peasant engaged to conduct them to a prac-

ticable ford at some distance higher up, as no bridge existed.

On reaching the ford, they found the river one wide and roaring sea of turbid water, boiling furiously along. They were smitten with despair. To attempt to cross, was as much as life was worth ; to remain where they were until the waters should subside, was to run the imminent hazard of being taken. Hungry and exhausted, however, they resolved, in spite of the danger and louring weather, to lie down upon the bank and rest awhile ; and, having set their guide to watch upon a neighbouring hillock, they dismounted, and stretched themselves to sleep.

Scarcely had they closed their eyes, however, when the prince was roused by the sentinel, who told him that he had seen horsemen descending from the high grounds at some distance. He rose with a start, and soon became aware of a numerous body of horsemen who were approaching, and who, there could be no doubt, were their pursuers. Awakening the rest of the party, they got ready the horses, eyed the foaming waters, and then gazed at the

horsemen, who were approaching with all the speed their weary animals could make. The case might now be called a choice of deaths; but fear of falling alive into the hands of their foes, and being delivered over to the charge of the furoshes, not to mention the tender mercies of their cousin king, prevailed over the terror of the flood. They bound their mother on her horse, tying her feet under its belly, placed a bandage over her eyes that she might not be made giddy by looking on the whirling waters, and two of them taking hold of her reins, they all plunged into the torrent. Desperate was the struggle, and far—far down were they driven; but, by the mercy of God, they all got safe through, and their pursuers came up in time only to see them land in safety on the opposite side, and retire into the country; whither their zeal was not hot enough to induce them to follow.

The fugitives were now secure, though far from human abode, and unprovided with food either for themselves or their horses. Their resting-place for the night was in a date-tree grove; and the next day they reached the Arab tents, where, though the accommodations and

means of sustenance were most homely, they were freely bestowed and enjoyed in peace. In fact, the most pressing part of their troubles and difficulties ceased from this point, and they proceeded without further molestation towards Felahi, the residence of the Chaab Sheikh.

On their way they were met by a certain Meer, a relative of the chief, with a large gathering of the Arabs; and were received at Felahi by Sheikh Saumeed himself with all possible respect and hospitality. Offers of more substantial assistance were likewise pressed upon them, with a view to the recovery of their country and rank; and assurances given that the Arab force to be placed at their command would be joined by many a Lour and Buchtiari chief with his followers. Nor was this a mere vain or empty proffer; for in Persia there is never wanting abundance of discontented chiefs of greater or less power, who are ready to rise in arms against the ruling prince. whoever he may be, and to take part with any adventurer whose enterprise may afford hope of promoting their own ambitious views, or gratifying a restless spirit. Among

these, the chiefs of the Lour and Buchtiari tribes have at all times been foremost to display either their predatory or their turbulent propensities: and to these may be added the Chaab Sheikhs themselves, through whose country scarcely can a caravan make its way with any hope of safety; and who, had the princes been in power, would now, as they often had done before, have resisted their authority.

Tempting as these offers might be, however, the elder prince resisted them all, as he had done those of his friends Wullee Khan, and the chiefs of the *Serhud*, or upper country; and, after a stay of some time with Sheikh Saumeed, he took boat at Felahi, and crossed the Shût-ul-Arab to Bussora.

His royal highness Reza Kolee Meerza takes no small credit to himself for his firm resistance of so many tempting offers, in which a sanguine mind might have contemplated the certainty of restoration to power and wealth, and for pursuing unswervingly the path pointed out by his father and approved of by his own good sense; nor can the praise of discretion and forbearance be fairly denied him. "I might have

mustered as many adventurers as I chose," he has often observed to me, "and kept the whole of Fars in commotion. Who was there that knew the country better than my brothers and myself? Every hill and pass were familiar to us. I might have ravaged the country from one end to the other, and baffled all pursuit for years. Incalculable is the evil I might have done to Mahomed Shah, as you well know. I might have ruined half his kingdom; but all this I have forborne to do. I have chosen a less destructive course,—a course which I hope will meet the approval of those whom alone I am now desirous to please, whose countenance and protection I desire to secure, and who will not, *inshallah!* permit my family to be insulted and destroyed, nor yet to perish for want."

From Bussora the party made their way along the course of the Euphrates, partly by land and partly by water, to Najeff-Ashruff, a city built in the Desert, at some distance from the right bank of that river. It contains the sepulchre of Allee, son-in-law of Mahomed, and is therefore held particularly sacred by the Persians, who are Sheahs, or of the sect of

Allee. Their adventures from Bussora to this city of refuge were confined principally to repelling attempts at pillage made upon them by the Arabs, Montefics, and others, through whose territories they passed. Having reached it, they lived there for some time in peace; but at length accounts, exaggerated as I believe, having come to their ears, of the evil treatment inflicted on the princes their relations, and even on their own families who had fallen into the Shah's hands, they resolved to delay no longer putting into execution the enterprise suggested by their father, of proceeding to solicit aid and protection from England; a resolution which was quickened by the tidings of his death.

In the month of October they repaired to Baghdad, in order to take counsel with the English resident there concerning the best mode of proceeding. They were received by Colonel Taylor with even more than his usual hospitality and kindness. Their case as princes in distress was of itself sufficient to excite sympathy; but there were some circumstances connected with the early history of a part of Colonel Taylor's family which rendered the

meeting of these princes and their mother in his house peculiarly affecting; for the lady of that gentleman had in her younger days been indebted to this princess for much kindness. And well, according to the testimony of the princes themselves, did she acquit herself of the obligation; they talk of her unwearied efforts to render them comfortable and happy with grateful enthusiasm.

At Baghdad they resided, as I believe, about three months, until the proper season for travelling came on; when, finding that the direct route through the Desert to Damascus or Aleppo would be too dangerous to attempt with a small party, they gave out that they intended to go the Hadj to Mecca, and the assembling of a caravan for this purpose was accordingly announced, in order to secure a sufficient force for putting their design into execution.

LETTER III.

To the practised and adventurous travellers of Europe, a journey like that which was now to be undertaken by these princes would present nothing formidable; and, unable to appreciate the effort of mental energy and resolution which must have been exerted by them to overcome their indefinable alarms, and determine them to commence it, they will naturally smile at a terror which appears as unaccountable as unmanly. But the fact is, that few Persians ever travel out of their own country, excepting merchants, or persons who, from motives of piety, are induced to make the pilgrimage to Mecca or Kerbelah,—a religious duty enjoined for once in their lives upon all good Mahometans. But *Feringistan*—Europe—is a world as distant almost, and as difficult of access, in the imagination of a Persian, as the moon

might appear to us. Few have ever attempted to reach it; and the accounts given, by those who have returned, of the difficulties to be encountered on the way, and of the utter discrepancy between the manners and customs of Europe and those of the East, have tended strongly to allay the warmth of curiosity which has been excited by their narrative of its wonders. Then the idea of a residence among Kaffers, — infidels, — where there are neither mosques nor moollahs, shocks their superstitious, if not religious feelings; and all, combined with the oriental indolence of their nation, co-operate to widen the terrible gulf that in their imagination divides Persia from Europe. Again, there is the sea, the deep wide sea, with all its dangers and horrors, that has to be encountered per force; and your Persians are true hydrophobists where the ocean is concerned. Take all these considerations together, allow for inexperience and prejudices, and then judge of the effort of resolution which it must have cost these three young men, nursed in all the luxury and independence of royalty, to undertake, alone and almost without attendants,

a journey, including several thousand miles of a sea voyage, to so distant a country as England.

In course of time a caravan was formed; but as it consisted chiefly of women and pilgrims, with a proportion of merchants, amounting in all to many hundred persons, for the most part quite unprepared for resistance, our princes engaged as guide and guard a Sheikh of the Agail tribe of Arabs, Mahomed Towengiree by name, who took with him by way of defenders about a hundred men, most of them on foot and only armed with spears. There were but few horsemen of the party; and even the princes adopted the country mode of riding in Kajawahs, or baskets, hung across the back of a camel, having their horses led unmounted. Of the whole party of fugitives who came to Najeff from Sheerauz, three of the brothers remained there with their mother; Solymaun Meerza, their uncle, with certain others of the late king's sons who joined them there, resolved to try their fortune in other quarters; while the three who are the subject of these epistles, thus pursued their way to the shores of England.

Their journey to Damascus occupied, by their

own account, about fifty days; during which they took an immense circuit to avoid encountering the roving and predatory Arabs, and frequently through mistakes of their guides they went astray in the waste. As an instance in proof of this, they told me that a cooking vessel, which had been lost at one of their nightly resting-places, had been found by them several days after, in consequence of their having unconsciously wandered back to the same ground. But the monotony of their way was occasionally cheered by the occurrence of such adventures as the desert is apt to give birth to. One day, as they journeyed along, the caravan was alarmed by the sight of several spear-heads appearing above the horizon; nor was their terror diminished by the speedy approach of some fifty or a hundred Arabs who carried them. A halt ensued, and much confusion. The guide, Mahomed Towengiree, appeared as much alarmed as any one; and no idea of offering the slightest resistance to any demand that might be made seemed to be for a moment entertained.

After some tumultuous consultation, the princes said to each other, "What! are these

scoundrels to be suffered to rob us in this sort of way without our making a single effort to protect ourselves? In the name of God, let us show a front, at all events, and try what we can do to get good terms." So, quitting their camels, they took to their horses, and by much persuasion induced those who were similarly provided to do the same; so that, what with horses and yaboos, they managed to produce a troop of riders not far inferior in numbers to that which was advancing to meet them.

A pause and a halt now took place, each party eyeing the other with menacing gestures as if to try the strength of their respective courage. "We must do something to frighten these fellows," said Timour Meerza at length to his brother. "We must not let them come too near, or they will find out how weak we are." While he was yet speaking, an Arab mounted on a fine white horse dashed forward some hundred yards in front of his friends, and, planting his spear in the ground, began to vociferate with wild and threatening gestures. It was the challenge customary on such occasions, when the Arabs wish to try each other's strength

and boldness before coming to blows; and Timour, burning for action, his gun already loaded and slung over his shoulder, sprung forth to meet him. Soon they neared each other; but, instead of closing, they took to manœuvring, the Arab with his spear, and Timour with his sword. A short while having made the latter aware of the extent of his adversary's skill and force, he turned and made off as if in flight towards the caravan; the Arab followed eagerly, secure of victory, when Timour, permitting him to come up within a couple of spear lengths, turned round in his saddle and fired, not at the rider, for that would have made the matter a blood-feud, which was to be avoided, but at the horse, which he hit in the shoulder, and down came man and beast, rolling on the ground.

There was a shout and a forward movement of the Arabs, which was checked by a show of advance on the part of the riders of the caravan; and Timour dismounting proceeded to help up his fallen antagonist, and, as he did so, said, "Do you see now we are stronger than you? I could have killed you as easily as I hit

your horse, but we don't want to make enemies of you. Say what is it that you and your people want?" A parley ensued. The Arabs insisted upon receiving a large sum of money as the price of permission for the caravan to pass free and unmolested. The prince and leaders of the caravan, emboldened by the success of their champion, declared that they would give no such thing; that, on the contrary, they were the stronger party; and that it rested with them to make minced meat of the Arabs. "We have a hundred *Toffuuchees* (musketeers) with us," said they, "and you see we know how to use our arms; therefore, so far from giving you anything, we declare that unless you provide the caravan with a supply of provisions for this night, you and your camp shall smart for it. We shall pay you honestly and well, but the food for man and horse must be produced." And so successfully did they bully the would-be robbers, that, as the princes affirm, they actually did supply the required provisions, and were glad to conciliate their powerful opponents with considerable presents.

It is not often that the roving Arab *catches such a Tartar* in his own deserts.

They did not, however, always escape as well. When within but a few days' march of Damascus, the caravan fell in with a large body of the Aneiza Arabs, well armed and mounted, who surrounded them and demanded a large ransom. "There is nothing for it here but to submit," said Mahomed Towengiree. "We must make the best terms we can, and pay with a good grace." Accordingly, after much detention and a long negotiation, a sum agreed upon was produced in money and goods, and the caravan was permitted to proceed to its destination.

They reached Damascus in February, and were hospitably received and entertained there by Mr. Farren, the British consul, to whose house they immediately went, as the authority of the power to which they looked for future support. At Damascus they remained for forty days, until the road over Mount Lebanon to the coast was open; after which, it being agreed that they should proceed to England by the

Malta steam-packet, they went to Beyroot, accompanied by Mr. Farren's chief dragoman, Assad Khayat, a Syrian of Greek descent, an excellent linguist, who, though still young, could speak English, French, and Italian, besides Greek, Latin, Arabic, and some other oriental languages, and who was to serve both on the way and during their stay in England as interpreter to their royal highnesses. At Beyroot they embarked on board of his Majesty's steamer Africaine, in which they reached Malta. There, after performing quarantine, they were transhipped on board the Spitfire packet, and in due time were landed at Falmouth.

During these two voyages they suffered extremely from sea-sickness, in spite of the great attention and kindness which were paid them by the respective commanders, of both of whom they talk in high terms. They declared to me, that, from the time of their embarkation until that of their coming to anchor at the termination of each voyage, they never held up their heads nor came on deck, and that the only intervals of ease they enjoyed were during the customary calls of the vessels at Gibraltar and

at Cadiz. The governor of the former fortress treated them in the most hospitable manner. They stayed at his house, and he gave a ball for their entertainment, at which, for the first time in their lives, they beheld an assembly of females unveiled, dressed out in the European fashion, and dancing with persons of the other sex; a matter which, as you may suppose, astonished not a little men who hold such an accomplishment as belonging to, and fit only for, professional dancers, who are considered as women of no character.

At this place they also had, for the first time, an opportunity of seeing a considerable body of regular troops drawn up under arms, and performing the field exercise and military manœuvres of a review with all the exquisite precision that belongs to European discipline and tactics; for the governor, with that attentive consideration for the amusement of his distinguished guests which actuated all his conduct, appears to have ordered a review of all the troops in garrison for that purpose. All, in fact, which they witnessed at Gibraltar, appears to have conveyed to them a strong impression of the

power of Great Britain, and the courteous kindness of its authorities and officers.

At Cadiz they only remained a few hours, during which they were received by his Majesty's consul there, but had no time to see much of the place. The only remark I remember hearing from them was respecting the size and magnificence of the cathedral, which appeared to have made a considerable impression on the mind of Timour Meerza. But I am not acquainted with many particulars of their voyage from thence to Falmouth, from whence, after a stay of two or three days, they repaired by one of the public coaches to Bath. To this place they seem to have been directed very much by chance. They had inquired whether there was not some city near to London where they might remain in private until they should learn the terms on which they were likely to be received by the English government; and having become wearied of the coach, at Bath, and finding there a good hôtel and treatment, they resolved to set up their rest in such comfortable quarters until their future movements should be determined by tidings from London.

Accordingly, in order to feel their way, the elder prince sent his brother Nejeff Koolee Meerza, the Wali, accompanied by Assad Khayat the interpreter, to London, with a letter to his Majesty's principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, acquainting his lordship with the arrival of his brothers and himself, and of their desire to throw themselves upon the hospitality and protection of Great Britain, and requesting his lordship's directions respecting their future proceedings.—I take this opportunity of apprising you, that for the future, in speaking of these royal personages, I shall make use of the term *Prince* to the elder, Reza Koolee Meerza, alone. The second, Nejeff Koolee Meerza, I shall generally designate by his title of *Wali;* while the third and youngest shall retain his own proper name of Timour Meerza.

The Wali and his companion arrived in town, I think, upon the 27th of May; and took up their abode for the time at Long's Hotel, from whence they forwarded their letters to the Foreign Office. The appeal which they thus made was of a very novel description, and calculated to place his Majesty's government in a

position of some delicacy. To treat at all with men who, whatever might be their personal claims or merits, could be considered in no other light than that of rebels against their lawful sovereign, and that sovereign our ally, might have been embarrassing: but no doubt could exist in the breasts of Englishmen, or in the councils of an English government, as to the imperative cogency of receiving with courtesy and hospitality strangers and princes, with whom many of our countrymen, British officers and travellers, had lived in amicable intercourse; whose protection and good-will they had profited by; and who had made a journey of many thousand miles, and encountered many dangers, to solicit a return of these good offices; and who were, moreover, the first natives of central Asia of any considerable rank who had ever given such a proof of confidence in Great Britain.

The fact is, that Asiatic notions of hospitality have at all times been far more extended than ours. In the days of Arabian greatness, when the character of that nation was higher than it now is, if a guest arrived, the last camel would

have been killed for his entertainment, the last loaf would have been set before him, even if the children of the host must thereby have been deprived of food. An Arab host, on many occasions when his guest was in want, has divided his substance with him; and there are instances on record of such hosts actually impoverishing themselves to vindicate their claim to a liberal hospitality, by enriching their guests.

When a chief or a prince in distress took refuge at the house of a noble or the court of a king, it would have been an eternal and indelible disgrace not to have received the fugitive with alacrity, and provided for his maintenance in a manner suitable to his rank for as long as his necessities or inclination might require him to remain. We have all read in Eastern story, and even in Eastern history, of kings placing armies at the disposal of distressed and fugitive princes, in order that they might recover their lost dominions. Thus Abbas the Second gave to Hoomayoon, Emperor of India, a force with which he quelled his rebellious nobles, and re-seated himself upon the throne of Dehlee.

It is true that the kings and nobles of the

East, fallen themselves from their former high estate, and distressed in pecuniary means, have departed in great measure from this magnificence and high-toned hospitality; but the remembrance of it remains, and continues in idea to be an attribute of all rich and powerful states. It is not then wonderful that the well-known riches and liberality of Great Britain should gain her credit with Orientals for a full share of Eastern hospitality. In fact, even in the late Shah's reign, a show of this high-esteemed virtue was maintained in Persia. Whenever a stranger of rank arrived in Persia, he was considered as the guest of the crown. The governor or prince of the district appointed him a lodging and a mehmandar, and it was understood that he was to be maintained at the expense of government. The required provisions (called *soorsaut*), which were procured for him and his suite from each village as he came along, were nominally allowed to them in account when paying their yearly taxes; so that, had the theory and practice of this regulation agreed, the traveller would in fact have been *bonâ fide* the royal guest.

But such was far from being the case. A mehmandar was indeed provided,—a hungry noble, or retainer of some prince whose object it was to wring what he could from the peasantry under the name of soorsaut for the guest, and to obtain from that guest the largest possible present. In general, of late the attempt to enforce the furnishing of soorsaut has been resisted by the peasantry; supplies have been scanty or bad at the best; and so distressing to any mind of common good feeling was the whole process, that it was usual for strangers to reject the soorsaut, and to obtain what they required by paying for it fairly.

Still the feeling exists; and even now in Persia you would hear of the number of kings, and princes, and persons of exalted rank, who have been or are entertained as royal guests. When I was at Mushed in Khorasan, there were half a dozen princes starving in this way,—eking out, by the sale of the remnant of their effects, the miserable pittance which reached them of their soorsaut, after the peculation of governors and men in office; and I have often heard Persia, and Mushed in particular, called "the

Asylum of fugitive Princes." Above all, the rights of sanctuary are sacred. "*Dakheel-e-tu ustum,*" "I have taken refuge with you," is a plea which no one could or would resist; and to betray or abandon a *Dakheel* would be to incur eternal ignominy.

Thus, in every view of the case, whether judging by their rules or our own feelings, there could be no doubt as to the course to be taken with regard to these royal though unfortunate personages. But, unhappily, their hopes were too highly pitched to be satisfied by common hospitality and kindness. Born and educated as princes, they forgot, or probably felt not, that their father, though a prince, the son of a king, was nothing more, in point of fact, than the governor of a province, removable at his sovereign's pleasure, and who could only preserve his situation by a deference and duty which neither he nor they had ever fully paid; and that, so far from having any inherent or hereditary claims on the province which they had been exhausting and misgoverning, the old king at the time of his death was actually on his way

to call their father to account for large arrears and malversation of revenue.

Nevertheless, it is certain that they did entertain hopes that the British government would interfere to secure to them the possession of, and, in fact, a sort of sovereignty in, the province of Fars; that the same power, in short, which had been so mainly instrumental in placing their cousin, Mahomed Shah, upon the throne, would interfere with his free agency so far as to insist upon his making over, to those who had disputed the succession with him by force of arms, one of the finest provinces of his kingdom; that is, not only to dissever from it almost a fourth of the whole, but thereby to afford to his avowed enemies the power of making future encroachment, and fostering constant rebellions in the rest.

It was a lucky thing for all concerned, and especially for the princes themselves, that the Wali arrived in London one day before our friend M. left it. He had conceived the probability of these young men entertaining some such notion in their heads, and he very judi-

ciously thought it would be a charitable act to them to point out the folly of cherishing for a moment the hope that it could be accomplished. The clear and forcible manner in which he elucidates every thing he takes in hand to explain, not less than his perfect knowledge of the language and circumstances of the country, enabled him to do this in a manner that soon brought down the poor Wali's towering pretensions, and put him in a frame of mind calculated to consider anything that might be hereafter granted to them as a boon. In fact, in dealing with Persians it must always be held in view that they constantly pitch their tone and demands as high as possible at first; not in the hope of getting all they ask, but of thereby securing more than they could obtain by more modest pretensions and direct demands at first. Thus it is quite possible that they never expected to succeed in their original extravagant views; but only, by preferring these, to secure better terms in the end. This one interview, however, demolished such airy castles, and rendered all future dealings with them comparatively easy.

It was on the 29th of May, that, after shaking hands with our friend M., I went to call upon the Wali. I found him in a dark room upon the ground-floor at Long's Hotel, seated on a sofa which commanded a view of the window. I announced myself as a gentleman who had travelled in Persia, and who, hearing that a prince of that country had arrived, a stranger in London, and knowing something of the language, had done himself the honour of calling to pay his respects. As I entered, the Wali rose from his seat, until he stood *upon* the sofa, not beside it, thus presenting a somewhat grotesque appearance; and he welcomed me with the "*khoosh âmedeed*" of his country. We soon got into conversation, and he was cheered and gratified by hearing his native tongue, even though imperfectly spoken. The conversation, after compliments, was confined to questions and replies concerning his journey; for he was obliged to attend to an engagement, and I left him, promising to repeat my visit.

Two days after this, a proposition was made that I should take charge of the princes during their residence in England, procure them a

suitable establishment as guests of the British government, and make them as comfortable as possible. To this I at once agreed; and the more readily, that I felt really interested in men who had thus broken the ice of intercourse between central Asia and England by so spirited an enterprise, and knew by bitter experience the feeling of forlornness which is apt to oppress the minds of strangers at a distance from their country and their homes, even when perfectly supplied with the luxuries as well as the necessaries of life. What traveller in distant lands is there who has not felt the want of sympathy and social intercourse, or will not confess that a crust of bread, and a mouthful of water, partaken with a familiar friend, a dear companion, is worth all the feasts and hecatombs that wealth could set before him, unseasoned with the blessing of their presence?

I speedily waited on the prince to inform him of the charge which I had accepted; and in a few days I was enabled to take his royal highness to a most handsome and cheerful suite of apartments in Mivart's Hotel, Brook-street,

calculated for the accommodation of the whole party, consisting of the three princes, their interpreter, and three Persian servants; and where arrangements had been made for supplying them with every comfort on a very liberal scale.

LETTER IV.

HITHERTO the Wali had not gone out at all, nor had he received any visitors. He awaited in his own apartments a reply to the letters of his elder brother, of which he was the bearer. But on Thursday the 9th of June, Sir R. I., who, you know, feels so deep an interest in all Oriental matters, called upon his royal highness. By his kind offices we obtained excellent places at a spectacle which, to an European, is probably one of the most striking and interesting that London affords,—the anniversary assembly of the charity children in St. Paul's cathedral; perhaps, to the untrained conceptions of an Oriental, its effect might be too confounding and overwhelming to be perfectly comprehensible.

On our way to the cathedral his attention was exceedingly attracted by the beauty of the

shops, but he was suffering somewhat too much from bewilderment to be susceptible of unmingled pleasure. He was much astonished at the immense size of the dray-horses; and not a little so at the crowd of carriages, and the prodigious bustle. What, indeed, can be conceived more stunning and confounding to an utter stranger, than a drive at this season from Brook-street, down Regent-street, and along the Strand, Fleet-street, and Ludgate-hill, with such an assembly and spectacle at the termination of it?

On entering the cathedral, where the prince was most courteously received and assisted by the authorities and officers in waiting, we were shown to the pew of the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, next to that which had been prepared for the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria. The sight was most magnificent. The divisions of children in their various liveries rising in regular gradation, row above row, under the immense dome, and forming as it were a lining to its contour, resembled the calyx of some prodigious flower; while the floor beneath, covered with a crowd of beautifully dressed people,

looked like a richly variegated pavement to this great cup. In fact, the immense height of the dome was lost sight of in the spectacle that filled it.

The prince was gratified with the scene; but still more so when, on the commencement of the service, this prodigious concourse of little ones struck up at once the simple but most beautiful notes of the hundredth psalm. He said little; but it was obvious that he was deeply impressed with the whole solemnity. As the service proceeded, and the music of the choir arose in all its harmony, echoed by the full chorus of children, his attention continued powerfully arrested; but during the reading of the lessons and prayers I saw that it flagged. He had received a gracious acknowledgment from the Duchess of Kent and the Princess, the latter of whom, as the future queen of this country, he had expressed a strong desire to see. The full effect of the spectacle had been produced; and at the end of the second lesson I thought it more prudent to withdraw him, while the impression continued deep and favourable, than to fatigue him with the remainder of

a service which he could not comprehend. So, intimating this wish to one of the officers near us, way was immediately made, and we retreated by the passage which had been reserved for their Royal Highnesses the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria.

Some gentlemen kindly suggested our taking a bird's-eye view of the body of the cathedral from the organ, which was most strikingly grand; and, with this concluding *coup d'œil* to dwell upon, we took the prince away. But, in retreating, he failed not to bestow a few minutes' regard upon the monuments which we passed on our way to the door, especially on that of Admiral Collingwood; and he made some very pertinent remarks in reply to the explanations which his inquiries called forth.

On our way back, while passing through Ludgate-hill, I took him into Everington's shawl warehouse. He was much delighted with its splendour, and with the exquisite articles which were courteously brought forth to be shown to him; but he was most pleased by a curious arrangement of mirrors by which he saw his own figure seven or eight times reflected. Such

conceits are common in the houses of the great in Persia, and he understood the full merit of the contrivance in question. I was somewhat surprised to find him so indifferent a judge of the values of the various shawls; but this proceeded from the great difference that exists between the taste for those things in Persia and in Europe.

Proceeding homewards, his eye was caught by some wax busts in a hair-dresser's window; and this sight, which probably was quite novel to him, entirely threw him off his guard. Surprised out of that gravity and formal decorum which men of rank in Persia pique themselves upon maintaining, he started forward from his seat, and, pointing towards them, exclaimed with a loud voice, "*Een che cheezee-ust—Een che cheezee-ust?*—What are these? What are these?" I explained what they were, and he kept on the alert all the way home eagerly looking out for others, and always exclaiming as he saw them, "*Ajaib cheezee-ust!*—Wonderful things these!" I do think he was more tickled by these same wax dolls than by all he saw at St. Paul's.

After dinner, having secured a box at the Opera, I took him to see Lablache in the part of Marina Falieri, and Grisi in that of Ellena. He was much astonished and delighted, as you may well imagine, at the first *coup d'œil* of the house; and he confessed himself to be pleased with the singing of Grisi, although more gratified, I suspect, by her own appearance: but when Lablache came on the stage, and I pointed him out as one of our first-rate vocalists, and asked him what he thought of his performance, he replied, "*Ah! ee cheezee neest—ee poochust.*—Ah! he is nothing at all—he is not worth hearing:" then, pointing to Grisi, he continued, "*Oon khoob ust,*—She is the good one."

The opera went on heavily enough with him. He got interested a little, it is true, in the scene where the Duke is brought before the council, and taken off to be executed. "What are they going to do with him?" said he; "Ah, poor wretch! don't let them kill him." And he was somewhat interested in the parting scene between the Duke and Ellena, although it was not easy to make him comprehend the full gist of the drama. In fact, spite of an ice which

was brought him to quench his thirst, and which he pronounced to be an "*Ajaib cheez*,"—a wonderful (that is, excellent) thing,—it was no easy matter to induce him to stay for the ballet, which was Benyousky; and which, being brilliant and showy, I was desirous he should see. But the dancing, when it came, was a reward for all. My friend was perfectly ravished; and at last, after gloating over the glittering crowd, he broke out, "Well, I have been accustomed to see the Shah's dancing-women and all the harem let loose into the gardens in their richest dresses, so that I am used to a show of beautiful women; and it is well for me that I am so, for, *Wullah Billah!* were any one not so trained to see such a sight as this, it would drive him mad."

I was not a little surprised, however, at his insensibility to the splendid singing and to the music in general, for the Persians rather pique themselves upon being a musical people; but the interpreter, a shrewd man, to whom I mentioned my surprise, observed, that he did not at all wonder at it. "I," said he, "am better acquainted than he can be with your European

customs and practices, and, of course, have more than once heard European music; but I declare to you that our own music of Damascus is more to my taste. I am used to it, and like it; but this of England I don't understand, and consequently do not relish it."

On leaving the house, we had to stand in the crush-room and passage, waiting for our carriage, which could not for some time be found; and even when the servant did discover where it stood, we were forced to walk at least forty yards, as it could not drive up to the door. The prince was mightily discomposed at this. He had no idea of waiting, and still less of compromising his dignity so much as to walk; and in spite of my explaining to him that these were accidents to which all, whatsoever their rank, were exposed on a crowded opera night, he was out of humour all the way home. "Alas!" thought I, "poor prince! if you are so easily annoyed,—if your feelings of rank and dignity are still so sensitive,—I pity you: what a prospect is before you; what distress have you not inevitably to endure!"

Next day the prince was left alone in his

glory at Mivart's; for, having received from his Majesty's government a kind reply to the letters of his brother, and a gracious invitation for the whole party to repair to London, he despatched the interpreter Assad down to Bath, to intimate these good tidings, and to guide the two remaining princes to the metropolis. I believe, in fact, they were heartily tired of waiting at Bath, in spite of a great deal of kindness which they received, and which they have at all times been most ready to acknowledge. Figure to yourself the condition of these two princes and their two servants, without one word of the language, utter strangers in a city where not a soul knew a single word of theirs,—unable to express their wants, anxious and dispirited from the uncertainty of their own fate, and, from mere absence of employment or any means of amusement, disposed to brood over the past, and dwell with bitterness on all they had lost. No wonder, I think you will admit, that they were impatient for the return of their messenger; no wonder that the Wali was equally anxious to despatch this messenger of comfort to his lonely brothers.

On the 11th, however, previous to their arrival, desirous to procure my friend the Wali as much amusement as possible, I took him to the flower-show of the Horticultural Society in their gardens at Chiswick. It was a bleak and windy day, unfavourable for the appearance of the country or the gardens; yet the multitude of carriages, and the crowds of well-dressed ladies as we entered, struck him pretty forcibly. He walked upon the velvet turf, and went up to the rose-bushes, every flower and bud of which he touched and petted with his hands, and expressed considerable satisfaction. But this gradually abated as the sight grew familiar to him, and he discovered that there was no ultimate object in view, no grand show as in a theatre. It appeared, too, that the poor prince was very short-sighted, so that he could only make out the general effect of distant objects. We could not get close to the flower-stands, and he could distinguish nothing but a great gush of blossom. It so happened, too, that early in the day there were but few beautiful women in the garden; and as the gusts of wind freshened, threatening rain, he began to get

tired, and to talk of going home, for it approached the hour when Orientals like to indulge in an afternoon nap. I consented to his wishes, but first proposed that he should take some refreshment. "No, no," said he, "I want nothing:" but, after a little pause, he added, "Is there any wine?"—"By all means," said I, and away we went to the refreshment rooms, accompanied by Mr. B., a gentleman who had known the princes well at Bushire, and who had joined us in the gardens.

The prince chose port wine, of which he took three good bumpers, and I then proposed that we should go; but the place was sheltered, the wine began to warm him, and a number of ladies and gentlemen had gathered round. "No," said he, "let us wait a little and look about us;" and he returned with interest the sharp gaze which his singular dress and figure drew from many a bright eye. But, after peering quite as much as politeness would have permitted into every female face around, he said, "Ah! there is not much worth waiting for here; let us go yonder:" and away we went

accordingly across the lawn, followed and met by numbers of the company.

I saw that his step was now becoming lighter, and that his head was wagging a little from side to side; and, after a while, he stopped short, and looking up in my face with a queer leering expression, he said, "Ah, I am better now.—*Keif mee-ayid.*" "*Keif*" (that is, the exhilaration derived from intoxicating substances, without the intoxication itself), "*Keif* is coming; I am happy now; come, let us just sit down here on this bench, and look at these people passing before us. Wherever I sit they will be sure to come fast enough. I am as great a *tamáshah* (raree-show) myself, as anything here."

And, sure enough, he was right. No sooner had we seated ourselves than the crowd began to gather round, passing and re-passing us in a manner that enabled us to see much more than we should have done had we been walking about; and my friend, now in a state of greater comfort, made many free and amusing remarks. The beauty of the ladies' dresses delighted him;

but he complained that many of them were no better than gay deceivers. "*Gool mizenund,*" said he, "they play me tricks (or, they are cheats); for, when my eye is attracted by a group of gay-looking persons clad all in beautiful colours, they approach, and lo! I find them all old and ugly."—"*Punah-bur-Khodah!*—God protect us!" exclaimed he, after awhile, as they came by in troops; too many, alas! having little claim to any other description. "God protect us! What women!—what dresses!—why can't they dress as becomes their age? But here comes one surely—ah! pooh! another cheat. Ah! there is another. No—not much worth neither—she is too white; she has no life; we don't like white beauties. Do you like those white and red curling locks, and those light eyes?" I replied that we esteemed fair beauties, and blue or grey eyes, very much, when united with suitable features. "Ah, well! we do not in Persia: deep black eyes for us, and the eyebrows like a pair of arches, with a fine rich colour. Now, there—there is one who has something of it—just a *leetle*. You must know that among us we distinguish

two kinds of beauty; one of which we value highly, and the other we admire but little. We call them *sebâhut* and *mallâhut*. The first consists in mere regularity of feature, fine eyes, a fine nose, a beautiful mouth, perhaps, but without life or expression; for this we have no great fancy. The other consists in that beauty of expression which may exist independent of form and features. The mouth may be ill-made, the nose a little awry, the eyes no great things, the chin not what it should be; and yet, in the whole face there may be a spirit and a zest, a something more taking than mere beauty of form, which catches the heart of man in spite of himself. This is what we value, what we covet. We say that such a face '*Namak dared*,' has *salt* (the term *mallâhut* comes from an Arabic word signifying salt). Now stay, I will show you one who has *namak*, and one that has none. Ah! there! look at that person; she has a little, not much: but there! look at that girl with the black eyebrows, they are a little like Persian ones; she now has *mallâhut*. But, *Punah-bur-Khodah!* how few there are with either. Stop! look at

the lady in the lilac dress: now she has what we call *sebâhut*, and you, perhaps, would call her beautiful." It was a fair and rather delicate girl, with very light hair and little colour; interesting, we should have said, and with tolerable pretensions to be called a pretty blonde. I told him so. "*Ah! heech musruff na dared.*—Ah! she is worth nothing as a beauty," said he; and so he went on, rattling away with a string of not very complimentary remarks on the ladies who flitted by, till at length the *Keif*, I suppose, subsiding, and with it his spirits, he repeated his desire to leave the gardens, and I immediately complied. He had assuredly enjoyed himself to a certain extent, but it was not at all according to his Persian notions; he wanted fellowship of feeling and boon companions. "Ah!" said he, as we were passing over the soft shaven grass, and saw the multitudes flitting past in incessant movement, "if this were Persia now, how differently would these people be employing themselves on this turf, which is like velvet, and among this gush of flowers and rich verdure! Not one spot, not a bush would there be without its party seated

in the shade, drinking their wine to the sound of instruments. Why can't these people sit still and take rest?" He was rather provoked at being so constantly stared at, but bore it well on the whole. On leaving the gardens, the whole road to London was so crowded with strings of carriages, that we could hardly get along. It was still but five o'clock, the most crowded hour of the show. He was astonished at their number, and asked if I thought there were many more left in London. I think he did not give much credit to my assertion, that, if we were driving through the streets at that very time, we should not miss them. What would he have said had he seen the multitudes of vehicles of all sorts and descriptions that filled every common and open spot, besides the public road, for near two miles below the gardens?

In the evening I accompanied the prince to dine with Sir R. I. where we met with Lord T. and several other pleasant people. Here he was very well off, being the almost sole object of attention; and his spirits did not droop, for he supported them very reasonably with wine.

I must do him the credit to say, however, that, though he partook very freely of every wine that was offered during the time of dinner, he stopped short of anything like intoxication; and when the bottle went round afterwards he passed it, saying, "No—*buss ust*—enough." In this and in all other particulars of *bienséance* his behaviour was perfectly unexceptionable; and to those who knew that Orientals in their own country always eat with their fingers unaided by the appliances of knives and forks, it was a subject of admiration to see how well he made use of these instruments. As the dishes were handed round, he made a point of tasting them all, as is the custom in Turkey, and, perhaps, from curiosity. When he found one to his taste, he ate the portion which he took; if not, he quietly sent it away without remark.

Sweetmeats being handed round at the dessert, he took with much relish some preserved ginger; observing, at the same time, that he did not know how it was, but that the English seemed to have a strong partiality for mingling bitters with their sweets. "Do you like bitter things?" said he. I replied, that certainly in

some preserves a degree of bitterness was considered as essential to excellence. "Ah no," observed he; "that I can never agree in. How can it be?" At this very moment a plate of fine preserved Malta oranges, a sweetmeat which it was thought he would like, was presented to him by the desire of Lady I.; and without once reflecting on the strong dislike he had just been expressing for bitter things, I cut and gave him a piece. He took a bit and began to chew it, when suddenly his face changed to an expression of blank dismay, like that of a child cheated into taking physic. "Eh! *Punah-bur-Khodah, een che cheezee ust.*—Good heaven, what is this?" mumbled he, with the water almost running from his mouth, for he dared not compress his lips, but sat staring for a good half-minute, uncertain, as it seemed, whether to swallow the unsavoury morsel or put it out. In fact, what became of it, or whether it ever found its way into his stomach, I do not know; but grimaces of more intense distress I never saw. "What is the matter, prince?" said I; "is that bitter too?"—"Bitter!" repeated he, with an accent of inexpressible disgust, "it is the

very father of bitterness. Did not I tell you that all you English were fond of bitter things, and that we Persians hate them?" I made an apology for the mistake, and we laughed, of course; but, though he took it very well, he steadily refused all the other sweetmeats which Lady I. kindly pressed upon him "to put the bitter taste out of his mouth." "No, no, lady," said he; "be *buxsheed*, excuse me; it is enough—no more!" On going up to the drawing-room I asked him whether he would have coffee or tea; and if the former, whether he chose it with sugar, after the European fashion, or bitter, after that of the East. He replied in Persian, that he would have no coffee, but tea; adding in broken English, and laughing heartily, "No, no, not more bitter, bitter enough."

He was a good deal interested by looking over some prints of Eastern subjects, particularly those in Morier's Travels. He was quite delighted with the Persian concert. "*Wah wah*," said he, "*che khoob kesheedust*,—how capitally that's done! I know them all. There is so-and-so, and so-and-so;" naming every one of the performers, and pronouncing them to be excel-

lent likenesses. He laughed loud and long at the sketch of the Persian breakfast, declaring that he knew the people represented there also. "Wullah!" said he, "that is just the way old Hajee,—(such an one) hangs over the mujmooah when he's going to plunge his fist into the pillaw!" He was not so well pleased with the print of the Key-kâj exercise, and did not understand the position and attitude of the horse; for he said, "See! that horse must have been shot (goolah khoord ust)."

On the following day (Sunday), I took the Wali a ride through the Regent's Park, and towards Finchley, being desirous of showing him something of the richness of English country scenery. He was greatly struck with the beauty of the park, which was in most delicious verdure, and delighted with the gay crowds that filled it. The day was sweet and genial, and there were numbers of pretty and well-dressed women passing up and down. I pointed out many things which I thought would interest him, but he sat for awhile absorbed as if in thought. "Ah, well!" said he at last; "what a sad pity it is, after all, that men must die!"

"Ay, so it is, prince," replied I; "but you remember there is a heaven — a paradise to come."—"Ay," said he, "there is, and that is the consolation; there *is* another world. But, *wullah!* these places go far to make a man forget it."

When we cleared the town, and got out to more open ground, the Wali began to gaze about him with a renewed interest: "*Ah! che khoob jaee*," said he, as we passed Primrose-hill, "what a fine place is this! This is something like, now; this reminds me of Persia. There, I would just wish to wander about or ride on that *sahra*," meaning by that word a plain without trees or cultivation. But to the exquisite beauty of the country, with its sweet inclosures and wooded luxuriance, he paid but small attention; and in a little while he asked to drive home, giving as a reason that he expected his brothers to arrive from Bath. This they did in the evening; but, being weary with their journey, they went early to bed, and I deferred paying my respects to them until the following day.

LETTER V.

On the following day after breakfast, I repaired to the hotel, where I found the whole three princes seated along with my friend Meerza I— of Hayleybury College, their countryman, though now a perfect Englishman in manners, language, and feeling, who, having heard of their arrival, had come to pay his respects, and do what might be in his power for their comfort in the stranger land.

I found the elder prince, Reza Koolee Meerza, a tall, comely, handsome-looking man, clad in the usual Persian kabba and cap, seated on his heels upon a sofa at the head of the room, from which he rose on the approach of a guest; a mode of salute which had something of the ludicrous in it. He welcomed me very courteously with the usual Persian expressions, and in a manner that bespoke the perfectly well-bred gen-

tleman. Timour, the youngest, was seated on a sofa, writing or drawing something with as perfect an air of nonchalance as if he had made no part of the company; nor did he acknowledge any one until introduced to him by his elder brother. His figure was one which could not fail of immediately attracting all who saw him. Tall, slender, and formed for activity, his carriage habitually erect and bold, yet free from the smallest approach to bravado, gave the most perfect idea of gallantry, courage, and lofty daring: his handsome countenance, when animated by conversation, beamed with vivacity and intelligence; and none could see the glance of his keen and varying eye without feeling that it could "melt in love" as well as kindle in war. In truth, Timour Meerza is one of those richly endowed creatures who, if born under happier stars, could not fail of running a brilliant career: for his fine form, his careless happy disposition, imperturbable good temper, and power of wit and conversation, would infallibly have made him a great favourite with society; while his skill and address in all athletic exercises, his military taste and talents, his shrewd judgment and general fine

abilities, would have as surely borne him forward in the more serious business of life. My friend the Wali, now only second in the play, sat silent and demure, only now and then making a quiet remark or replying to a question. More than one person called on them to-day; some, their acquaintances at Bath, and others who, having been in Persia, were desirous of giving them the comfort of hearing a few words in their own language: but they kept in the house, refusing to go out, according to the fashion of the East, after a journey.

Next day (the 14th) I took the party to see the flower-show at the Surrey Zoological Gardens, and went early to avoid too great a crowd. The garden was beautiful, and the princes could not avoid being struck with it; but they appeared more disposed to look at the animals than the flowers. Timour Meerza requested to be shown the hawks,—he meant those of the hunting species; and he was greatly disappointed at seeing but few, the majority being only the less noble varieties of the birds of prey. The lions pleased him better; and he urged the keepers frequently to rouse them, that he might see them

to advantage and in a rage. As to the bears, he turned up his nose at them. "Do you call these miserable things bears?" said he; "let them come to Fars, I will show them finer bears on every hill." On the whole they enjoyed the place more than they chose to confess, but not so much as I expected. They were amused at seeing some of the animals, which in Persia run wild, taken so much care of here, particularly some species of wild hogs. "Ah!" said Timour, "you cherish these creatures here, in Persia we only kill them: I have killed a hundred of them in one day on a hunting party." The elder prince was annoyed at the crowd of gazers; he could not find a spot to sit down upon in private *(khelwut)*, as he said; and after a short time they all asked to be taken home. In speaking of the lions, they admired one or two much; but the others they thought too small to have a place there. "Eh! I have killed a larger at Shahpore," said Timour, "and thought little of it."—"He says truth," observed the elder prince; and then he related the story of his killing the lion at Shahpore, which I have already told you.

A day or two after this, the princes made their debut in the world of fashion at an evening party at the Marchioness of S.'s. This, to the elder prince, who is of a very sensitive disposition in all that regards the usages of, and intercourse with, society, who feels his change of condition, and shrinks from anything like public exposure, was a trying occasion. He had been induced by some friend of the interpreter Assad, to go out on a previous evening to a large ball, at which he not only found himself a complete stranger, without the means of communication, but a gazing-stock for multitudes who had not a conception of what the party were, or, if they had, at least had little delicacy in the expression of their curiosity. Of this the prince complained to me, and desired to know whether the party to which he was this evening invited was such as that he had already seen. I assured him that he might not only be satisfied that he would find himself in one of the most distinguished societies that England could produce, but that he would meet with all possible consideration and attention. "Well," said he, "you are my guide,—I am in your hands; remember I am a stranger

in the ways of this country, and I trust to you to order matters so that neither shall I commit any impropriety, nor shall I be placed in a situation to suffer disrespect or insult." Of course, I replied that it should be my study to avoid anything of the sort, and in due time we repaired to the Marchioness's party.

It was an occasion at least as trying to me as to the prince, for I had yet to learn how these three young men could and would comport themselves in society. I knew that Persian noblemen *can* behave themselves, when they please, like perfect gentlemen; but I also know that some of their usages differ much from ours; that many of their practices and customs would be considered as desperate *grossièretés* with us; while, on the other hand, they might not understand, and therefore might possibly take offence at, some points in our conduct and manners, in which none could by possibility be intended. Besides, princes might think themselves entitled to take greater liberties than private individuals, or might claim more exclusive attention than could possibly be paid them; so that on the whole I was anxious as to the result of this debut.

We arrived early, so that the small number of persons already in the rooms had a good opportunity of seeing the princes as they proceeded with the slow and dignified step of Persian state to the apartment where they were received by the noble master and mistress of the mansion. Here they were accommodated with seats, on which the elder remained all the evening. I think the impression made by both his manners and appearance was favourable; and his jewelled dagger, which was handed round the room, was the object of universal admiration. This he had told me happened to be in his girdle when he was forced to fly. It was one, he took care to assure me, among the least beautiful and costly of a dozen others in his possession; but he loved it because it had enamelled upon it the picture of his eldest son, a boy of eight or nine years old, whom he described as most beautiful, and well-beloved. This picture represents a boy with the red cheeks and lips, long-shaped dark eyes, large pencilled brows, and long side-locks, which all Persian paintings give to their beautiful youths, and which really are the striking characteristics of the Kajer race; one of the finest,

perhaps, in the world, of which the royal progeny forms the handsomest as well as the largest family. The little fellow is clad in the usual dress in which they stand in the king's presence, with a hawk upon his fist; and with much complacency and parental delight did the prince point out the picture, and descant upon the perfections of his offspring. This beautiful dagger gave occasion to many questions regarding their escape and travels, their wives and families, the Persian ladies, &c.; and the prince declared that the lady of the house herself had no small resemblance to certain beauties of the royal family whom he named. He was delighted with the courtesy and kindness which he met with from all.

In the mean time the rooms filled with a crowd of the most distinguished in rank and fashion, and his royal highness had an opportunity of seeing some of those celebrated persons whose names had reached his ears even in Persia. Among these were the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, &c. &c. and several of the foreign ministers. Many of the company, both ladies and gentlemen, requested an introduction to the

elder prince; and so much was to be done in the way of interpretation, that I could attend to little else. Timour Meerza had contrived to form his own acquaintances; and when I left the elder prince for a moment to see what was going on, I found him in very animated intercourse by signs, aided by one or two words he had picked up, with a very pretty lady, who on her part appeared greatly amused and interested with her strange acquaintance. As for the Wali, he took matters coolly, sitting quietly in an observant mood until spoken to, when, on the question being interpreted, he always had his prompt reply at hand.

In fact, matters on the whole went on with tolerable smoothness; but there were occasional interruptions, chiefly from the *brusquerie* of my friend Timour, who has no great patience, nor idea of self-command. Feeling himself thirsty, and being told that water and refreshments were to be found in an apartment provided for them, he called out to me at the top of his voice, "Come along then, let us go and get it;" and with that he set himself to push and elbow his way through the crowd of *élégantes* and

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fashionables in so rough a manner, that I hung back in dismay. On this he called out loudly to me to "come on: what was I waiting for?" This attracted attention enough, and to spare. "Look at him, how he goes!" said one. "See how he shoves and pushes the people!" said another. "That's a fellow that won't be easily stopped now. How loud he talks too!" said a third; and there was a general buzz of surprise, which made it disagreeable enough to me; and I took an opportunity of cautioning my young friend with regard to his future conduct in such cases. He took the admonition in perfect good part, but not without wondering in his turn that I could have seen anything contrary to propriety in his conduct. I own that I was not sorry when the elder prince, who became weary, proposed to depart; and we left the gay throng to return to our respective homes.

The next party to which I accompanied the princes was a still more serious affair. It was the Caledonian ball, to which the princes had received a polite invitation from the ladies patronesses, and to which no one could be admitted unless in costume or uniform. Their

usual dress, though far from a brilliant one, was sufficient for them; and though, from more causes than one, I was not in the best spirits for such an exertion, I was obliged myself to put on a Persian dress and join their party, to guide my helpless charges through the mazes of this numerous and brilliant assembly. I made use of a dress which I had worn in my late visit to Persia; but, when the princes saw it, they found as many faults with it as a London milliner would to the most grotesque foreign-built dress, or Stultz or Nugee to the cut of a Calcutta or Jamaica-made coat; and they insisted on piecing up my rig with certain articles from their own wardrobes. And certainly we did go forth a most purpose-like group of Persians.

The rooms were already full when we arrived, and it was with difficulty we made our way into the apartment where the ladies patronesses awaited the arrival of her Royal Highness the Landgravine of Hesse Hombergh. In this place the princes were introduced to several very distinguished personages, and among the rest to his Grace of Wellington. But the elder

prince, impatient of the crowd, asked with some anxiety "what was to be done? and whether a seat was to be had?" So I led him out of that crush-room to wind our way with difficulty into the greater crowd of the larger room.

Here he was absolutely lost and bewildered in the whirl of figures, and was considerably annoyed by the shoving and pushing which he endured from the moving throng. Yet I think he would have been gratified too, had it not been for a nervous terror which he laboured strongly under of meeting any *Shahzadehs*, or princes; for he had heard that some of the royal family were to honour the ball with their presence. The fact is, that he keenly feels the somewhat equivocal situation in which he knows himself to be placed. Unaccustomed to appear in public in any other character than that of a prince invested with considerable power and state, he conceives that all eyes are upon him, and cannot understand the possibility of mingling in society as a private individual. He experiences a sensation of shame, like one who knows he is committing an unworthy action, and seeks to hide himself from view.

At last he got ensconced behind a doorway, which happened to be the very one he would have avoided, had he known it to be that by which the Landgravine was to enter, attended by all the patronesses and a brilliant cortège. But his vain alarm was quieted, when, on the flood-gates opening, this tide of grand company rushed past him without even noticing his presence among the multitude of far gayer figures that gathered round to gaze upon it as it passed to the head of the grand saloon. He was a good deal struck with the procession of splendidly dressed ladies; but, as the greater number of them had passed the zenith of their youth and beauty, his observations were by no means universally complimentary. I think that he was more impressed by the striking up of the full band, than by the cause which called the music forth.

I left him after a while to look after the younger, Timour Meerza, who was plunging recklessly into the crowd, and who I feared might be lost altogether, as his costume was in no degree such as to make him conspicuous; and I reached him just as three pipers, the first

of them a giant in full tartans, entered the room, playing most loudly on their instruments, and followed by all the charity children in their kilts and bonnets. He was delighted with this, which was quite a novel sight to him; and his animated observations upon the various groups that thronged around us, if I could have written them down, would have been very amusing; but a friend coming up at the time, and offering to be his cicerone, I left them and returned to his elder brother.

I found him beginning to weary sadly, although more than one gentleman who understood a little Persian had come up and talked to him during my absence. "Come, let us be off," said he; "let us try and find out some quiet place. I want to get some water and some rest." So off we went to the refreshment-room, which at this time was nearly empty. But scarcely had we entered it, when parties began to drop in from the great rooms to taste the good things which were laid out. "Ah," said he "this will do; let us stay here, this is the watering-place. The experienced hunter always seeks that out, for thither does all the

game repair. You will see now, we need not seek them; they will come to us." And so it proved: and there in comparative quiet did he for a while indulge in observations on all the ladies who passed us, as if in review, while, our own costumes not being very remarkable, he was not pestered with notice.

While sitting here, the bagpipes again struck up some pibrach; on which the prince, pricking up his ears, with a start, exclaimed, "What is that? that is Persian music! *Wullah!* that is my own country music. Hush! let me listen." And he leaned his head on one side as one does to catch a delicious strain. In fact, to unaccustomed ears, the sounds were not unlike the clangour of the *nokara 'khaneh*, or band that plays at stated intervals above the gates of Eastern princes; although an enthusiastic Highlander might not be altogether pleased with the comparison. As the pibrach continued, and the measure quickened, the prince became quite agitated. "*Ai-wahi! ai-wahi!*" said he, shaking his head slowly from side to side, "that is true Irânee; it brings my own country quite to my view! That is just the strain they play

when we go to fight. *Ai-wahi! ai-wahi!*" And his eyes, half filled with tears, were actually dancing in his head. It was well that the music ceased before his agitation became quite ungovernable, as seemed likely soon to be the case.

During this time the Wali, with the interpreter, had taken care of themselves, and visited, I believe, every part of the rooms: I could not accompany them, as the elder prince was more dependent, and required my aid; but, after a time, the rolling tide of company brought them within hail, and he desired them to keep by him until I should find Timour. This was no easy task, for he enjoyed the bustle, and was not disposed to be caught. But at length, being thoroughly weary, he came in like an exhausted fish to the hand of the angler; and we all left the gay scene, with food enough to supply reflection for some time.

On going to the hotel (the next day, I think,) I was happy to find with the princes Sir G. O., so long an ambassador at the court of Persia. He had, I believe, already called on them; and nothing could be more fortunate for their com-

fort than the presence of this gentleman in London. Interested in all that relates to their country, and well acquainted with their father and family, having remained at Sheerauz for some time at a period when they were but children, Sir G. was naturally desirous to make the country which they now visited as strangers as agreeable to them as possible, and to promote their views so far as might be expedient; while, on the other hand, no one could be better qualified to do so, both from his intimate knowledge of their language, and his wide acquaintance with the best society. In fact, what with the constant company of Meerza, who fortunately, from its being the season of vacation at Hayleybury, could dedicate the most of his time to his countrymen, and who had considerately been requested to do so by the authorities at the Foreign Office,—with the kind attentions of Sir G. O., and my own endeavours to provide in all ways for their comfort, the condition of these princes might assuredly have been one of very considerable enjoyment, could they have been but wise enough to make the most of it. But, unfortunately for themselves, they

had not philosophy enough to enjoy the present without brooding over the past, or thinking of the future. The recollections of what they had lost,—of the uncertainty which hung over the fate of their families, and their own future destinies, was a constant source of anxiety, that preyed on the minds, particularly of the two elder, and rendered them incapable of tasting the pleasures that were offered to them. Not that they altogether shunned society; on the contrary, a quiet party, particularly a dinner party, consisting of a few pleasant persons, and, above all, the company of pretty women after it, was their delight. "We are true *Pillaw-khoors*," (eaters of pillaw—that is, dinner-men,) have they often said to me. "We like to take our evening's meal where we are to pass our evening, and not to go out after it." And well did they enjoy such parties. It was a crowd —a great promiscuous crowd—which the two eldest disliked. As for the youngest, he made nothing of elbowing his way through everything. But even a ball or rout they could relish occasionally, provided they had some snug place separate from the throng where they

could sit down and see it pass. "Is there a *jaee pâkeezah, jaee khelwut*—a comfortable quiet place, where we are going, where we may be out of the bustle?" was the usual question asked of me by the elder prince, when I mentioned to him an invitation, or put him in mind of an engagement. "Will it not be such a crush and a hubbub as we found at such and such a place?" And when we had entered, and looked round the rooms, he would immediately make for some recess or sofa in the least crowded apartment, where he would ensconce himself. "Ay, this is the place, Saheb Fraser; let us sit here; it is private: here we can see all that passes, and make our remarks." And, in fact, to these places his friends and acquaintances soon found their way; the ladies, particularly, came to see, and amuse themselves; so that they had quite as much as they desired of what was going on.

One of the first acts of attention on the part of Sir G. O. was to introduce them to Mrs. W. L., a lady of the world of fashion, who, on the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo, gave at her house near Grosvenor-gate an elegant de-

jeuné, and who was kind enough to invite the princes to view the grand review given on that day, in Hyde-park, from that commanding situation. Nothing could have been more happily arranged. From the top of Mrs. W. L.'s house the whole field was visible, and every evolution of the troops might be seen; while, after the review was over, we had a brilliant show of the officers in their gay costumes, who came in succession to pay their compliments to the numerous assemblage of ladies who filled the rooms above.

There were, as I understood, nearly five thousand men of the Guards and household troops on the field; such men, in point of figure, dress, and appointments, horses included, as probably Europe could not equal, certainly not surpass; and the rapid precision with which every movement and manœuvre was performed was admirably calculated to strike and astonish the Persians, who, though accustomed to military displays of a very different description, could yet appreciate the perfection which they witnessed here. "What *sungers!*" (fortified stockades or bulwarks), said they, when the infantry formed

their impregnable squares, and stood prepared to receive cavalry. "One would say that each *sunger* was a solid mass: not a foot nor an arm is out of place. See! it is a white line, and a red line, with the steel glittering above. Ah, look! they kneel, they fire,—*barikillah, barikillah!* admirable!"

As for Timour, he was quite unable to contain himself. He stood with flushed cheek, flashing eye, and outstretched neck, like a bird on the wing, following every movement as if he would have precipitated himself down among the performers. "Ah, well done, well done!" exclaimed he, as the horse-guards made a splendid charge; "these fellows will do the business. But what do they stop for?" continued he, looking blank, as the whole drew up at the proper place, quite forgetting that it was not a charge in earnest. "Ah! look at these horses," said he again, as two or three horses with empty saddles ran across the plain in a very business-like style; "their riders have got shot now! (gola khourdund.)" But when the light cavalry took to skirmishing with the retreating artillery, and harassing them, selon les règles, without closing, he lost

all patience; "*Ai na-merdha!*—Ah, cowards!" exclaimed he; "why don't you charge at once like men? charge ye—and the guns are taken."

In a little while the whole body of flying artillery swept by at speed, a splendid sight: "What do you think of that?" said some of the bystanders. "*Ah, Piderish be suzund!*" returned he with a shake of the head; "may their fathers be roasted! we know too much of these concerns, to our cost. These were the things that Lindsay (Sir Henry Bethune Lindsay) had, when he met us near Komaishah; and when we were galloping up with our horsemen, and thought we were carrying everything before us, he stopped short all at once, and blew us to the devil."

The elder prince was more collected, and confined himself, for the most part, to moderate exclamations of praise; or, if questioned as to his opinion of the beauty of such or such an evolution, he would say "it was perfection,—could not be better." But when at length, after some heavy firing both of artillery and infantry, with a beautifully sustained display of file-firing from the latter, the smoke blew away, disclosing one long and perfect line of troops, as steady as a

rock, flanked by the terrible batteries that had just been thundering, he was quite surprised out of all his moderation, and, after a few most expressive ejaculations, he turned to me and said, "Wullah! Saheb Fraser, the horsemen of Irân are the best in the world, as you know well; but if there were a hundred thousand of them here on the spot, they could not touch that line;—that line! what could touch it?" The review was over, the show at an end; yet still he stood gazing, till at length the movement of those around him woke him from a sort of trance, which no doubt had as much to do with the past as the present. He heaved a deep sigh, and said, as we passed on to descend, "What are a hundred balls or operas to this?"

And now a brilliant scene took place in the beautiful rooms of our kind hostess, which were opened to receive both the actors and spectators of the gay pageant just terminated without. In they came, "fair women and brave men;" the former, of the highest and loveliest and most gifted of the land, who all clustered around the princes with much interest; and among them Malibran, the hapless and lamented Malibran,

who was mightily taken with the vivacity and independence, yet gentle bearing, of Prince Timour. Among the latter were not a few of those who had themselves taken part in the memorable engagement of which this was the anniversary, and the princes were here introduced to many individuals whose names will have no mean place in the history of those glorious days. In they came, all glittering in their gorgeous uniforms, brilliant fragments of a shining spectacle, until the whole house, refreshment-rooms and all, sparkled like a palace of the Genii. But the highest attractions in time will cease to please; and, at length fatigued with excitement, the princes took leave of their obliging entertainer and returned home.

LETTER VI.

THE next amusement to which I carried the princes was the Coliseum in Regent's Park. I had already found that there was no judging of the probable effect of any novelty on their unpractised senses by that which it produced on our own minds, so that I rather expected a disappointment on this occasion than otherwise. They traversed the gallery in the first place, and viewed all the busts and statues with considerable attention. They recognised the Duke of Wellington; were interested by the busts of his Majesty and several of his ministers, which were pointed out to them; and made some shrewd remarks on several of the full-length statues, particularly on some antique ones of females in a nude state. There is the cast of a colossal head of Alexander the Great,

the original of which, in marble, has been much corroded by exposure to weather, probably; so that the countenance has the appearance of being pitted all over with small irregular holes, resembling the small-pox. The princes believed this resemblance to be intentional, and bestowed upon it their unqualified approbation. "Ah! how admirably that is done," said they; "see, it is exactly the small-pox!"

They preferred ascending by steam in the cylinder, to mounting the staircase on foot. The movement astonished them a good deal; but it was not altogether a grateful sense of wonder, for they declared that it brought back something of their old steam-boat feelings, which afforded no pleasurable retrospect. At length they were landed in the first gallery above; and, whatever may have been their expectations, these were assuredly, on this occasion, far surpassed by the reality. I never saw men more delighted than they all were when the admirable Panorama of London burst upon their view. They remained long silent, but you saw by the radiant and smiling countenances what was going on within; and the Wali's little short-sighted eyes twinkled

like sparks of fire from between their half-closed lids. Long did they examine every part of the picture, both with the naked eye and the glasses that are placed there for the purpose, scarcely giving utterance to a word, except an occasional "*Ajaéb!*"—wonderful! but after looking at everything far and near, the villages beyond the town, and, above all, the river and the bridges, they began to ask questions. They appeared quite to understand that it was a painting upon a sheet, for they asked whether such and such things were or were not on the *purdeh* (or screen); and "*ai Barikillah, ai Barikillah!*" burst continually from their mouths, while the slow wagging of the head denoted their delight at each new object which required and obtained explanation. And "How far may that place there be from where we stand?" "Just fifty feet." "*Ajaéb!* and it looks as if it were two fursuks (seven or eight miles) off!" "*Mashallah!* what an *oostáde* (master) the painter must be! And it is true, all true; it *is* a *tucht* (plank, or plane surface) above, for there are the cracks in the plaster; and see! there is the point where the *purdeh* begins; you see no cracks there: wonderful! God

is great!" They were told the time and price which the painting had cost,—forty thousand pounds, I think, and six years of hard work. "*Mee-arzed*,—it is worth it all," said they with a nod of consent. To persons unaccustomed to hear of great monied speculations, it was no small surprise to hear that the £200,000, which this establishment cost to the first projectors, was all private outlay; but their wonder was still greater at being told that it had already cleared off two-thirds of its original cost, and would soon become a source of great profit. They were interested greatly in the whole concern, and went to the top to see the real view of London obtained from thence, but that did not please them half as much as the painted city; and they withdrew, assuring me that they had been infinitely gratified, and that they must often again come to visit "London" in the Coliseum.

From thence we drove round the park to the Zoological Gardens, and I was happy to find that this gay resort of young and old had its full share of attraction for the princes. Timour, as usual, treated rather contemptuously the specimens of certain animals which were familiar to

him on a more magnificent scale; and he was particularly amused with an unhappy camel, which was all they had to represent the herds of noble carriers of the desert, which swarm with every wandering tribe in Persia and Arabia. But they were all struck with admiration at the giraffes, a creature which they had neither seen nor heard of before. It was an interesting incident too, that one of the attendants, a negro, spoke Arabic; so that all of them, the Wali in particular, being the learned one, were able to converse with, and receive from him a full account of his graceful charges. The crowd, however, thickened round us so much during this conversation, that we were obliged to take to flight. Indeed, we went through the whole pretty much at a gallop; but it was an introduction to an amusement of very easy access, to which the princes might frequently return; and, as we took our way homewards, they all declared themselves delighted with their day's work, which I believe they would have wished to terminate there.

But such was not their fate. They had desired to see one of the theatres, and I had got a

box for them at Drury-lane; so that instead of turning in to sleep for a few hours, and then rising to a late dinner, as they would have wished, they had to dine at six, in order to be in proper time for the performance. The play, or rather opera, was the Siege of Rochelle, I think; but, in spite of good intentions, we only arrived to see the commencement of the second act, and as this began with a gallant dance, they were all perfectly delighted. "*Aajaib jaee!*—a wonderful place this! what riches, and what women! what dresses they have, and what waists! what bosoms! and all alike too—all as if they had been cast in one mould! And how their steps all go together! Wonderful indeed! this is *Behisht* (Paradise):" this was spoken of the corps-de-ballet, which was figuring away; and when the principal dancers came forward, of course their admiration did not fail to augment. But their interest in the piece ceased with the dancing; they could not understand the plot; and as for explaining the story as we went along, that, even the Meerza, who was with us, gave up. A little of the buffoonery they seemed to relish; and the last act, comprehending some

little fighting and the blowing up of the city gates, was rather more in their way; but, on the whole, they were so tired that there was some question about their staying the afterpiece. This was Gustavus the Third, which, though they could scarcely comprehend the first part, terminates in a masqued ball, that delighted them beyond measure, and sent them home declaring that, in spite of fatigue, they had seldom spent a day of greater enjoyment. You may be sure I was not the party least pleased when we all separated for the night at the door of the hotel; and I went to my own lodging in the full confidence of waking with a racking headache on the morrow.

Having been agreeably surprised by the pleasure they had derived from their visit to the Panorama, I thought they could scarce fail to be gratified by a view of the exhibition at Somerset-house. Had I reflected on the important difference which must subsist to an unpractised eye, between an immense collection of works of art, to appreciate which requires a species of positive education,—and a single chef-d'œuvre, the great merit of which depends less on strict

adherence to rules of art, than on presenting to the senses, by a very wonderful optical illusion, a fac-simile of reality, and is therefore palpable to all, I should have probably calculated upon the disappointment which I experienced in seeing the feeble impression which this magnificent exhibition produced; in fact, I had my doubts, though scarcely admitted to myself until the result proved their good foundation. They were bewildered rather than delighted; few of the landscapes interested them; and some of our first-rate artists would have been more surprised than pleased at the observations which the sight of their works called forth. The portraits were more attractive, especially those at full length of certain ladies; and both the two younger, particularly Timour, made some wonderfully shrewd remarks on the skill exhibited in the foreshortened limbs of one or two figures: one especially, in which a lady held her hand over her eyes as if shading her sight to catch some object, and another, called, I think, the infant warrior, with a great sword across his little lap, met with great applause. "*Che hereket!*—what movement there is! what expression!" was re-

iterated as they returned, more than once, to the point of admiration.

As a sportsman, Timour could not fail of being struck with Landseer's pictures; he would fain have been Lord Ossulston himself, gazing on his quarry as in the picture, though he could not quite comprehend how that quarry could be a bullock rather than a deer, even after I explained to him the nature of the game to which the specimen in the picture refers. But Chantry's dog, and the eyes of the cat fixed on the group of woodcocks in his admirable picture for the great sculptor, won his unqualified and almost noisy admiration. The great naval picture was gazed upon with wonder, not unmingled with unpleasant remembrances; but the Wali, much as he hates the sea and all belonging to it, paid a tribute to the liquidity of the water, and to the masterly manner in which the broken and splintered wood was represented. It was not to be expected that he could appreciate the more scientific perfections of that fine work of Stanfield's.

We paid a short visit to the sculpture-room, and I was rather surprised at observing that

some of the statues made fully as great an impression, particularly on the two elder princes, as the pictures; a remark which was more than once confirmed in the sequel. They admired the fleshy softness imparted to the marble, and were delighted with some of the children and female figures: but the survey both of pictures and sculpture was made in a very rapid way; and the total amount of satisfaction, balanced against the weariness and listlessness that prevailed throughout the greater part of the time, left little encouragement to set down picture exhibitions among the objects best calculated to amuse or instruct them.

I do not mention all the balls and parties to which the princes went, particularly those to which, from various circumstances, I did not accompany them; and still less would it amuse you to hear of the various and sundry invitations which I was obliged to refuse on their part. They were, I assure you, perfectly sensible of what was due to their own dignity, and saw through the indelicacy which would have held them out to public view, not so much to amuse them as for the gratification of others,—lions to

attract, and fill a suite of rooms for the night. "What sort of a place is this to which we are invited?" was the question always put to me when a letter or a note of invitation was handed to me. "Are the people respectable, the family noble? have we seen them? have any of them been introduced to us, or, through whom has their invitation been sent? It is surely against all rule for a perfect stranger to ask persons in our situation, as it must be so for us to accept of such unceremonious invitation. Is it to be the story of the *Khirs-e-Dushmunzearee*?" Now the *Khirs*, or Bear of Dushmunzearee, was, it appears, a terrible wild animal, which having committed great ravages, its name was used as a bugbear to quiet naughty children, although, however, being taken alive and brought to the town, multitudes came to see it, and it thus enriched its captors. Hence every monster produced to attract public notice is, in Persia, proverbially termed a *Khirs-e-Dushmunzearee*. So I was obliged to relate what particulars I knew of the soliciting parties, and to pledge myself for the respectability of those whose invitations I recommended their accepting. "Well," would

the prince say, "we are in your hands, Saheb Fraser; our honour is in your keeping; we are strangers, you must be our guide and guard; where you tell me to go, I will go; where you think I should not go, I will not visit; and remember, I go nowhere without you."

This was rather more of confidence than was, perhaps, perfectly convenient or agreeable for me, but scarcely more than a man in the prince's situation, keenly sensitive on the score of reputation and respect, naturally shy and reserved, a stranger in a distant country, the manners of which were totally at variance from those of his own, might be naturally inclined to repose in the person appointed as his guide and adviser. But, though it trammelled me so completely as to leave me scarcely any freedom at all, I could not, from motives independent of mere duty, have refused the trust. There was a charm of sweetness and of dignity about the elder prince, a mild and gentlemanly deportment, which secured to him affection as well as respect from those of any feeling around him. It was impossible not to be inspired with attachment as well as interest for one who had suffered so much; and who,

having strong claims upon sympathy and deference, bore the loss of departed yet not forgotten greatness, and present misfortunes, so meekly. I have never, so far as I remember, known a Persian of any rank possessed of so many amiable qualities, yet exhibiting so few of the besetting vices of his country. In fact, his sentiments are so just, and his conduct so correct, that one cannot refrain from attributing to him a high degree of moral virtue. Thus, from day to day did I become more bound to the princes, and they more dependent on me, till in time they put their threat in practice, almost literally, and seldom would go out without me. But still, when they desired to excuse themselves from a party, the plea was, "No, no, we will not go there, Saheb Fraser; it is the *Khirs-e-Dush-munzearee.*"

But, in truth, their reluctance to go to parties, which I early observed, did not altogether arise from a dislike to meet the public gaze; it had its portion also in a sort of innate indolence, a reluctance to exertion, which was only to be overcome by some strong temptation. Even their forenoons were generally spent in a sort of

lounging inaction,—either looking over articles brought by tradesmen on view, or receiving visitors, or writing journals and bits of poetry; often in sleep. The great in Persia are very irregular in their habits of life. They rise, in general, early, because those who attend to their religious duties are bound to pray at sunrise. It is then they transact various pieces of business, and after a very light meal, at a later hour, they again retire to their harems until afternoon; then they come out, ride, or see company till after evening prayer, when they go and sit with their families, and dine late, often sitting up till the hour of midnight prayer arrives: but they preserve no regularity, often calling at other hours for food; and frequently, throwing over themselves a coverlit, they sleep where they sit.

The regular irregularity of a London life, you will see, squares but ill with this sort of anomalous freedom of action. All men in European countries are in some sort dependent upon others in point of service and assistance; and, where the division of labour is carried to so great an extent, few can maintain an establishment so large as to admit of commanding service of

all sorts and at all hours. Our poor princes, although certainly their humours and fancies were as much studied at the hotel as possible, found the habits of other people constantly interfering with theirs; and they were often summoned to "mount and go" when they would far rather have remained quiet at home. In fact, it most frequently happened that, when I called in the forenoon to take them to some show or amusement, all, or part of them, were asleep; and the time for effecting the purpose intended was past before they could all be got ready. This was so worrying, that at length, whenever there was an appointment to be kept, I made it a point to call them a full hour before the requisite time.

But this extreme indolence was chiefly owing to the want of a suitable exciting motive: had a riding or hunting party, for instance, at any time been proposed to Timour Meerza, he would have sprung up at once with alacrity to join it. A visit to the gunsmith's, where he had ordered some things to be made, was a never-failing cure for *ennui* to him; a review would have awakened them all; and in the sequel they made acquaintance with several fair friends, whom the elder

prince himself would have hastened to meet at any hour. I must, however, except Timour from the general charge of sleeping away his hours: he had discovered a great taste for drawing; and having provided himself with a box of colours, pencils, and paper, he spent a great deal of his time in copying prints or colouring them, or making most extraordinary figures of living things out of the resources of his own imagination; and, while the others were either dozing or writing in their rooms above, I have generally found him thus employed below.

The next party of importance to which I accompanied them was to a splendid ball given by Mr. H. at his magnificent house in D—— street. At the desire of Sir G. O., who wished to introduce the princes to his lady, we met at his house, and sat there for an hour before proceeding to the ball. Lady O. had known the family of the Firmaun Firmaee, and particularly the mother of the elder and younger prince when they were both young; and the renewal of this acquaintance was to them a very pleasing incident, recalling many interesting associations, so that they soon found themselves at home: as for the

Wali, he got fixed by a splendid Oriental MS., which Sir G. put into his hand, and which soon absorbed all his attention.

At length, however, to D—— street we all went, and found fourteen or fifteen superb rooms, filled with the most classic furniture and richest decorations, thrown open for the accommodation of an immense crowd of all that London could give forth of gay, and fair, and fashionable. The princes, having by this time formed a tolerable circle of acquaintances, began to take greater interest in the scenes that were passing, and even to recognise individuals whom they did not personally know. They now were never alone; their conspicuous figures soon brought their friends, particularly the ladies, to the place where they stood or sat; and the time passed agreeably enough in endeavours to maintain some degree of conversation. It was hard work for the poor interpreters; and, fortunately for me there was Sir G. himself in this case always ready, and more able than me to satisfy the curiosity of the fair inquirers, or of the princes themselves. They were delighted at meeting several of the ladies patronesses who had been

attentive to them at the fancy ball: but they were particularly attracted by the beauty of Lady N., which they pronounced to be quite Persian; a standard to which, amid the infinite variety of female loveliness with which they were surrounded, they still adhered as that of perfection. This style of beauty consists, as probably you know, in an oval countenance, approaching to round; a rich but rather dark complexion; small delicate nose, small mouth, with full, moist, red lips; large dark eyes, well-fringed with long lashes, and deepened and lengthened artificially by the use of the *surmah*, or black antimony, and over-arched by very black well-pencilled brows, nearly meeting above the nose; long black hair, braided into three or four great plaits behind, and having a lock or two wandering down the cheek and fair plump neck. Now there is much in all this, which you will be inclined to pronounce with them as constituting very strong pretensions to beauty, without prejudice to the claims of other styles and shades of colour. We had been talking a little of this at Sir G.'s before coming to the ball, and the prince had quoted his own aunt, a sister of his father's,

a lady whom Lady O. had frequently seen, as being a perfect specimen of their idea of beauty. To this Lady O. had cordially assented, declaring that she was in reality a very lovely woman; and promised to show him that night a lady who, to the best of her recollection, resembled his aunt very strongly. In the course of the night her ladyship performed her promise, introducing his royal highness to Lady H., the mother of Lady N.; and the prince at once admitted the resemblance. "But," said he, "*this* lady cannot be the *mother* of that lady; they must be sisters;" at which there was a laugh: but every one acknowledged that he was right; for who could see Lady H. surrounded by her beautiful daughters, and not imagine that she was but their eldest sister?

At this ball the princes really enjoyed themselves. I was weary of translating compliments and saying fine things; but the elder still insisted on remaining for a great part of the time in a comparatively retired spot, where he sat pensively watching the whirling throng before him, and ever and anon giving vent to some of the various ejaculations, or poetical snatches,

with which his countrymen are so fond of relieving a surcharged or bewildered mind. Timour had discovered an acquaintance, a very pretty woman, with whom, by means of his few broken English words, gestures, and occasional assistance from an interpreter, he contrived to keep up a very lively intercourse. It is wonderful with how small a number of words one may get on upon occasions; I once myself kept up a full conversation with a Russian major, my host, who did not understand a single word of any other language than his own, upon the strength of two Russian words, namely "good" and "bad;" and in Timour's case there was the additional language of the eyes in aid of all the rest. As for the Wali, he and the interpreter Assad kept together during the greater part of the evening, roaming at will through the crowd from one apartment to another, looking at the dancers, gazing at the ladies, who gazed at him in return; listening to the bands of music, and tossing off a glass of champaigne between whiles. I despaired of ever getting together the straggling flock when the time of retreating should arrive. At length, having seated the elder prince in one

of the ante-rooms, I went to look for the rest; and, having found Timour, with great difficulty tore him away from the attractions of the scene. We were all three together when his quick eye caught the Arab cloak of the Wali, and the interpreter's turban floating away in the crowd far off at the other end of the room or gallery; and he immediately began to bellow out "Ai Wali! Ai Wali!" just as if he had been shouting to a fellow-hunter across a ravine. You may imagine how the people stared, and how uncomfortably I felt; and I took the opportunity to point out this, and some other matters connected with conduct in society, to the elder prince, as things regarding which it would be well if he should caution his younger brothers. The wonder was that there was so little on the whole to reprove.

Balls, at this period, came thick upon us. Their royal highnesses had been invited for the very next evening to a magnificent fancy ball, to be held at the Hanover-square rooms, by the ladies patronesses themselves; and to it accordingly we went. It was an immense crowd; and, as none were admitted otherwise than in

costume or uniform, the effect was inexpressibly brilliant. The princes, too, saw it to great advantage; for, by the kind activity of their friends, seats were procured for them in one of the small galleries above, to which there is access granted only to certain privileged people, and where they could sit and overlook the glittering throng without being crowded or mixing with it. The elder prince continued in the seat prepared for him all night, conversing with the ladies who came up from time to time, some of whom remained pretty closely by him while he stayed: among them, however, were some of his friends; so that he had plenty of attention and amusement during the whole evening.

Hard work again for the interpreters! A constant repetition of the same questions and compliments.—Question, "Ask them do they like England?" Answer, "How can we do otherwise, seeing the great kindness we have met with here?"—"Is Persia a fine country?" "*Bellee*—to be sure! it is a fine country, and it is our own country; but what is it to England? Where is all the riches, and the know-

ledge, and the means and appliances (*ausá*) of every kind that we meet with here, to be found in Persia?"—"Do ask them what they think of the English ladies?" "Ah! what can I think of them, but that they are angels—Paradise itself!"—"What do they think of our dancing? I am sure they must be shocked at that!" "What should we think, but that all that you do is good?"—"Do Persian ladies dance?" "No, no; Astaffer Allah! (God forbid!) they look at the dancing women,—the king has many dancing women for the purpose of amusing them."—"Ask them if the Persian ladies are handsome?" "Certainly handsome; but not like English ladies." (Then in broken English:) "Persian ladies no good—English ladies much good!"—"Ask him how many wives he has?" This being a question which, in Persia, can never be put, and if put would certainly not be replied to, it produced here only a variety of jokes, equivocations, or inventions. "No, no; no wife; wife gone dead!" (with a mock-melancholy look.) Or, "One — no more, Wullah!"—"Ah, he does not tell truth; tell him it is a very bad custom

that of taking so many wives. What do they do with them all? I suppose he cuts off their heads sometimes with that great knife he wears in his girdle?" The prince smiled at such observations, and used to explain by signs that the ladies were rather apt to use him ill than he to maltreat the ladies; and that they often used to hit him cuffs and pinch him well, which he pretended he could not hinder them from doing; in short, that he was under petticoat government:—at which, of course, his fair questioners would shake their heads and laugh. On this occasion, in reply to the abuse which was launched against polygamy, he offered one ingeniously devised excuse, which succeeded, as he could see, so well, that he repeated it more than once in the sequel.

"Tell these ladies," said he to me, "that our Persian women are not like those of England,—educated, accomplished, fitted to be companions to their husbands; they can do little except embroider and look after their slaves, or cook a dinner. Now, your English ladies are as well educated as yourselves, and are full of accomplishments; they retain their beauty so well,

that, after having had a large family, they are still lovely and blooming;—*Wullah!* they are fresher and more lovely after forty, than our women are at twenty-five. Thus, one English woman is worth at least ten Persian women, and so we take quantity to make up for quality; had we English women, then one would suffice." I need not tell you how much this sort of reasoning amused and delighted his fair auditors.

LETTER VII.

A DAY or two afterwards, the princes dined with Lord P., at whose house they had the honour of being introduced to some of the most distinguished personages of the day. There is something in the privacy of even a large dinner party which gives to every individual, and especially to those who figure as principal guests, a degree of conspicuousness which is sometimes painful; and I confess that I had not as yet acquired sufficient confidence in my charges, to enable me to see them mingle with strangers at a formal party of this sort without some qualms of apprehension. The customs of the East, as regards those matters, are so different from those of the West, that I continually dreaded the occurrence of some solecism or failure in politeness on their part, which should make

them disagreeably remarkable. Dinner in Persia, though the chief meal of the day, and of course, as in all countries, a serious affair, is a matter of far less importance or duration than with us. Even when a Persian gives a feast to his friends, the time of eating scarcely occupies half an hour. The guests sit on the felt carpets along one side, or at the top of the room, with their backs leaning against the wall; a long narrow strip of chintz or coloured cotton, called the *sofra*, (or, as we should say, table-cloth,) is spread before the whole party by two servants. Basins and ewers containing cold water are handed; and, the right hand being held above the former, a little water from the latter is poured upon it. This is the ablution before meals. Trays of whitened copper, termed *mujmuahs*, are then brought in; each containing, in general, a dish of beautiful plain boiled rice, with another of some sort of pillaw,—that is, rice with butter and meat, or vegetables, or both; one or two smaller dishes containing exquisite stews, to season the rice; some pickles, sweetmeats, cut pieces of radish and turnip, a sort of

omelette, a partridge or fowl stewed to rags in some sweet or sour sauce, and one or two bowls of different sherbets, each having a long-handled carved pear-wood spoon floating in it. One of these mujmuahs, thus loaded, is placed usually for every two guests; and, when all are thus served, the master of the feast, uttering the word "*Bismillah!*—In the name of God!" by way of grace, leans forwards, and the whole fall to.

From that time till the affair is finished, which, as I have said, does not exceed half an hour, not a word is uttered; the fingers are busily employed in forming the *lugmehs*, or handfuls of rice, mingled with the other things, with which the jaws are kept a-going, the only cessation being to swallow a spoonful or two of the sherbet. By and by one or two arise from their stooping posture, or keep only trifling with their fingers till their host erects himself with an audible "*Alhumdulillah!*—Thanks be to God!" which is echoed by the company. This is not unfrequently followed by indications of repletion, which are considered with us as a most grievous breach of good manners, but with them are only so many

tributes to their host's good cheer: then follows the washing of hands, often an imperfect enough ceremony; and the removal of the greasy table-cloth, with its contents. Other trifles there are, which I need not particularize, that would shock our notions of cleanliness and good-breeding. But you will see, from this hasty sketch, the utter dissimilarity between a Persian and an English dinner party. There is nothing of the elegance and refinement, the mingling of conversation with the more sensual enjoyment of eating, and the delightful social charm which hallows the lengthened pleasures of the English meal. The charm of social intercourse, and very delightful conversation, I am far from denying to Persians; but it is not at meals that it usually displays itself.

Now, you can imagine that, knowing all this, and how much the great in Persia are in their habits guided by impulse, I sat long upon thorns on such occasions, and afraid of some unlucky explosion. At the hotel, during meals, even when they had invited a guest to dine with them, the princes seemed to hold themselves bound by no rule of ceremony; particularly the

two youngest, who would start up from table without the least cause assigned, and leave the room, humming an air or spouting a piece of poetry, as if to show their unconcern. They had eat enough, or were tired of sitting, or wanted to say a prayer, or some other crotchet had suddenly struck their brain; and they never imagined that they were committing an indelicacy towards others in indulging it. I have seen some of their guests, grave, well-bred persons, right sore astonished at such a bolt. "Is the prince unwell?" they would inquire; and, on being told that it was nothing but some momentary whim that had struck him, seemed much inclined to look upon it as the effect of a trifling crack in the poor man's cranium. The elder prince, who assuredly has as much as any man I ever saw of an intuitive sense of courtesy, was very soon brought to see and to correct these éccentricities; but the Wali could not be plagued to do so when at home, and Timour was too thoughtless to attend to what was told him. All with him was the impulse of the moment; I have seen him, when a favourite dish was brought in to serve for the whole company, fairly empty the con-

tents of it into his own plate; and this not from greediness, for he is far from deficient in liberality, but from utter want of consideration, produced by that selfishness which is the vice of education in those who have been reared as chiefs and princes. I have seen him do the same thing as a sort of brag, and, after having looked round the company and laughed at their blank faces, quietly rise and empty from his own plate into theirs two-thirds of what he had taken. Now, you know that, however atrocious such a proceeding might seem to us, it does not shock Orientals, to whom it is a sort of distinction to receive a handful from the plate of a great man.

I remember Timour himself long after, when he had become more acquainted with our customs and ways of proceeding, talk very amusingly of his own strange habits before he had seen European manners. "I used to do wonderful things," said he, "and sometimes I astonished Mr. F. (the British consul at Damascus, in whose house they stayed for a while). You know our customs at dinner, and how we help ourselves without ceremony to things at a distance, if what we fancy does not happen to be before us. I

remember once while sitting at dinner, that, having nothing that pleased me within reach, I stretched over, and stuck my fork into a great stewed bird at the other side of the table, and brought it all dripping to my own plate, upsetting several things on the way. How Mr. F. did stare, and then laugh! but he explained to me then that such was not the European fashion, and that we always should ask for what we want, and receive a portion; so I took care not to do so again." But, nevertheless, I remember seeing the Wali perform exactly similar feats, though not at places where they were on any ceremony.

I must, however, do the whole of them the justice to say, that I do not remember a single occasion where, either by mistake or inconsiderateness, they committed the smallest noticeable impropriety in company; on the contrary, not only was their conduct guided by strict good-breeding, but they obviously exerted themselves to show their sense of the kindness they experienced by all means in their power: and so well did they acquit themselves in their behaviour, and so rapidly did they acquire the

habits of those they associated with, that few would have imagined they had ever been accustomed to other modes of life. On the present occasion the conversation was most animated, both during the time of dinner and afterwards; and I believe that there was no one present who did not leave the party with a very favourable impression of the Persian princes.

One day, about the end of June, I called as usual after breakfast on the princes. The eldest was lounging in bed up-stairs. I expressed my surprise to him that he should waste so much time in indolence and inactivity when he had so excellent an opportunity of employing it beneficially. "What am I to do?" replied he. "Here am I without any real business to call for exertion, and with an anxious heavy heart. I take no joy in what is going on. I have little pleasure in going out anywhere. What then can I do so good as to keep in bed, and sleep when I am able? When awake, what have I to think of but of my wives and children, my brothers and sisters, and all the family of my father, whom I left in captivity or misery? God knows what their

fate is now! Have they been permitted to live? Are they still prisoners? Is the honour of our women yet preserved? Have they got bread to eat, or clothes to cover them? These are the thoughts that make me miserable; and is it wonderful they should do so? You know that everything is on my head; I must think for all. For, what help to me is that thoughtless fellow Timour Meerza, or even the Wali? They have none of the burthen to bear. They all look to me." I admitted that he had much to think of, and many cares; but urged that there was no use in indulging in melancholy. He had done his best for those committed to his charge, and his conscience might be at rest as regarded them. Why encourage unpleasant anticipations? All would, *inshallah!* go well; and, in any case, premature sorrow was not only useless, but hurtful. "Your observation is a just one," replied he; "all you say is right: but it is impossible to command the spirit, or to prevent the uncertain future from causing us uneasiness. You recommend me to go and enjoy myself,—to see sights, and go to

operas, and such amusements; and by the favour of the English government I can do all this; but where is the heart to relish these pleasures? I am not even certain that it is right in me to indulge myself as far as I do; for, a few days hence, and where will all these fine things and grand sights be? I shall have left them for ever; and only the remembrance of them will dwell with me, when to renew the enjoyment will be impossible."—"But, prince, surely this is going much too far; at that rate, no one should ever rejoice to-day, because grief may come to-morrow." And the words of the old song came to my recollection:

> "Since pleasure can only bring pain,
> Let us all be unhappy together."

But I did not try to explain them; I only followed up the *reductio ad absurdum*, by adding, "Is a man not to eat a good dinner to-day, because he may be obliged to go without one to-morrow?"—"Ay," replied he, "you are right; these were but random words of mine. I will take your advice, and see what there is to be seen to-day, and afterwards let

come what pleases God." So I went out, and got them a box for the opera of that very night.

In the mean time the prince had a lesson as to the difference between buying and selling in England. A gentleman from Storr and Mortimer's had waited on him to show some of their beautiful work in jewellery. The prince was delighted with the splendour and execution of the ornaments, but still more astonished at the prices put upon each article. "Well," said he, "as such things bear so high a value here, perhaps it may suit my purpose to dispose of a few. Let us see what he says as to purchasing." So he ordered his servant to bring a few pearls and other articles, which he had still retained; and, as a matter of curiosity, his beautiful dagger, to hear what they would say of it. The result was as usual in such cases. The values named, though only at a rough guess, were so far under those at which they were estimated by the owner, that he exclaimed, "Ay, it is well seen how you make your money. Here you ask me three times as much for your goods as they would fetch with us;

but you won't offer me one half of what mine actually cost me at home!"

In the evening I called to take them to the opera. "Ah! Saheb Fraser," said Timour Meerza, meeting me with a face all beaming with joy, "we have had great luck to-day. Do you know, we have got hold of a regular Persian *sâz* (musical instrument),—a *centâra*, or dulcimer! A man came here to play to us on something like it; so I described it to him, and he brought me one, which I have hired from him at three shillings a week."—"It is all true," said the prince. "*Ai-wâhi, ai-wâhi*, it is a capital instrument. And such good luck to get it too! But you shall hear it—it is *behisht!* (paradise.) And Timour Meerza, there, is an *oostâde*, a capital musician. He studied it ten years, Wullah! He knows it as a science. *Be-murg-e-tu* — by your death, you must hear him! Timour Meerza, tell the servant to bring the centâra, and let Saheb Fraser hear you play. He will be enchanted."

They had just risen from dinner, and it was time to go to the opera, which was La Somnambula, and in which Grisi and Lablache

played the first parts. All this I represented; but that was nothing. "Patience — time enough!" said the prince. "Sit down for a moment, *ai musselmaun!* What is all the haste? we shall have enough of the opera—sit down!" So the centâra was brought, and down squatted Timour Meerza on the carpet with the instrument before him; and, seizing the quills, he began to play in a style that indicated a perfect acquaintance with it, whatever might be its powers, or the nature of his music. The other princes, taking their seats with infinite gravity, listened to the shrill sounds, as the quills rattled over the wires, with a delight that was truly amusing; but which was shared by Meerza J. who stood drinking them in with equal eagerness.

"There now!" remarked the elder prince, as the music became louder and quicker; "that is the piece which is played with us just before we engage in battle. Who could resist that?" And certainly it was a clangour sufficient to have put many an enemy to flight, especially if lovers of good music. But it rather resembled the jingling of broken pots and pans than the mag-

nificent crash of battle. "This again," said his royal highness, as the measure changed,—"this is a dance; listen to it! Would not that strain make a lame man dance, even if he had never learned it?"—"Ay," said Meerza J. to me in English; "that now is what I call music. *You* may not like it, perhaps; but it gives me more pleasure than twenty operas. Now it is ten years since I have heard this piece before, and during all that time I have been assimilating to your tastes and habits. And I enjoy your fine music too; yet so strong are old feelings and impressions, that none of it moves me like this. Compared with this, it gives me no pleasure. What, then, must your opera airs be to these men who know nothing about it?" The Meerza was quite right; association of ideas gives more than half its value to music. The Italian laughs quite as much at the Highland pibrach as the Highlander does at the clang of the Persian *sáz*. All enjoy their own music more than that of other countries; and, in fact, the effect of what was then being executed was very remarkable. "Ah!" exclaimed the elder prince, after looking long at me with

glowing cheeks and half-shut eyes, "that strain, now, makes a man die with pleasure! *Ghush mee-kuned;* he swoons away on hearing it!" The Wali, unable longer to contain himself, rose abruptly from his seat, and took to walking about, calling out "*Wah! wah! ah-wahi!*" and rolling his eyes and head, and tossing his arms about occasionally, while he ejaculated scraps of poetry and sundry rapturous expressions. So here were Grisi, Lablache, Tambourini, Rubini, and all the attractions of the first opera and singers in the world, despised, abandoned, for the wiry jingle of an old dulcimer, by men to whom one would have imagined the sight and sounds they were engaged to hear would have proved the highest possible treat. Such is the force, however, of early habits and associations; and such the mistakes that men, reasoning from their own impressions, are apt to make with regard to others. It was not, as you have seen, the first time in the course of this duty that I miscalculated thus; nor was it the last.

At length, the dulcimer proving out of tune, they all rose, and to the opera we went. The

coup d'œil, on entering, could not fail to please, although all but the eldest had been in the house before. They professed themselves tolerably well satisfied with the music in general; but when I asked the youngest, Timour, how he liked the voice of Grisi, who was accompanying the air she was singing with the most graceful acting, he replied, "The voice is sweet enough, but I would not give those arms and that neck for a dozen of such voices."

"Astonishing!" exclaimed the Wali, at a grand instrumental crash, "how they can make all these hundred musicians strike the same note at once, with such rapid execution, and not one of them miss! This is your European dexterity; it is much more surprising than the music they make. And the piece and entertainment altogether is a thousand times better than any of our plays in Persia; not so much for the sense or the subject, which I do not quite comprehend, as for the splendour of getting-up, and the wonderful apparatus of the whole concern. It is quite perfect. What a pity it is we do not understand a word!" Yet, by taking a good deal of trouble to explain

what was going on, they did comprehend something of the plot of the Somnambula, and abused Elvino bitterly for his savage conduct to their favourite Grisi. They were very nervous during her hazardous transit across the beam from the window of the mill, calling out loudly, "God grant she does not fall!" and were delighted at the reconciliation with which the piece closes. They admired Grisi's figure the more, just because it was not so unnaturally slender, and more substantial than those of most of the young women they saw.

The ballet was Benyousky, and they were much pleased by its brilliancy and action. The dancing was a never-failing source of admiration. They were astonished at the feats of the two chief male and female performers, but were most pleased by the male; for it was obvious that the public indelicacy of display which marks the high opera-dancing, shocked their ideas of propriety far more than it tended to excite their pleasurable emotions. They were thoroughly wearied out by the time all was over; and, on the whole, fatigue and ennui seemed so nearly balanced against pleasure, that

I resolved not to use any inducements to make them go to another opera, but to let the next proposition come from themselves.

The next place of public amusement I took them to was Vauxhall. The illuminated garden, with music in the open air, and the crowds of company passing and re-passing, exhibited some resemblance of Eastern fêtes, and seemed to promise them considerable gratification. Nor was I mistaken. They understood the thing, and therefore liked it—far better, they assured me, than the opera. There was a burlesque farce, in which a skating scene was admirably represented. This delighted Timour Meerza: he actually shouted with laughter; and expressed his joy in a manner that amused the spectators around him nearly as much as the show itself. Then the rope-dancing, so like to their own *bom-bázee*, but surpassing it, was a great treat; and certainly some of the feats were enough to excite their wonder. The fireworks formed a finale quite after their own hearts. They were thoroughly delighted; and there was something in the whole affair so congenial to their tastes, that they left the place

better pleased than with most of the more refined amusements which had been lavished on them, and declared that they should often return to it.

LETTER VIII.

WHEN the princes first commenced their London career, it had been proposed that they should see as much as might be possible, during their stay in England, of those objects best calculated to give them an idea, not only of its riches and power, but of the sources from which these are materially derived; thus, a tour through the manufacturing districts was talked of, and a visit to Portsmouth, Chatham, Woolwich, &c. Their own indolence prevented this plan taking effect; and they lost an opportunity of improving themselves, which can probably never occur again.

"It is all very well," the elder would say to me; "but what good will it do to me to look at these great wheels, and to see how they make cloth or thread, while all my poor family are perhaps in want of bread? All we want to do is to settle our business here, and set out on our

return to them. When do you think we may be ready to go?"—"Oh, all in good time, prince," would I reply; "but, in the mean time, have you no curiosity? would you not yourself wish to see some of the great manufactories that furnish the cotton stuffs you wear, and the knives and scissors, and guns and pistols, you are so fond of getting in Persia?"—"Ah, yes, to be sure: well, and how far may they be off? could we go there to-day?"—"It would require two full days to go there, Shahzadeh, and of course two to come straight back; besides which, you could not be less than three days there."—"Wullah! that is a week! and how can we leave London for a week, when so and so, and so and so, is still uncertain? No, no; at present we will remain where we are, and see what is to be seen here." So there was nothing for it but to take them in the humour, and show them such objects as were best worthy of attention within a short range.

Among the things which had awakened their curiosity, were the Thames Tunnel and iron railways. A bridge under water! that was a thing of which they could form no notion; and a steam carriage, running upon a road made of

iron, was not less astonishing. So a party was made to go to the Tunnel and the Greenwich Railway. The drive through the crowded streets which lead to London-bridge, was, of itself, always a treat to them. "For my part," said the prince, more than once as we drove along, "I think the streets and the shops are themselves about the best shows in London: what riches, what an endless variety of goods! one cannot tire of them." And as for Timour, he would have stopped fifty times on the way to gaze at and examine both inside and outside of cutlers', jewellers', and gunsmiths' shops. One day the Wali set himself to count all the carriages that should pass on the one side their coach as it drove along, while Timour reckoned those on the other; and great was their astonishment at comparing notes at the end of a drive from St. Paul's Church-yard to Regent-street. At night, in going out or returning from parties, they were never tired of looking down the long lines of the streets which they passed to right and left, marked out as they were by the seemingly interminable double rows of lamps: it appeared to convey to them a magnificent idea of London.

On the present occasion, having stopped at the house of an artist in the City as we went along, they were much gratified by some of his pictures; and acknowledged the great merit of one which represented the battle of Trafalgar, and was, I believe, about to be presented to his Majesty; although the Wali regarded the subject with a hydrophobic shudder. But I was amused with a remark made, I think, by Timour Meerza: one of the company having praised the execution of the sky in a certain picture, "Ah!" said he, "he must know well how to paint the sky, seeing that he lives so near it;" the studio was at the very top of the house, which was a high one, and the prince had been almost wearied in ascending to it.

Arrived at the Tunnel, they were a good deal struck, and somewhat discomposed, by the deep descent; and eyed the great machine, which was in full operation, with considerable surprise: but I did not see that they were by any means remarkably impressed by the effect of the subterraneous passage itself, to the end of which, however, they went and returned, writing their names in the book of visitors. At first they

seemed scarcely to comprehend that the river was actually flowing, and ships sailing, over them; and, when they did, it awakened rather a sensation of personal fear than of admiration and wonder; for the Wali exclaimed, "Eh! and perhaps it may burst down upon us and drown us! let us be off;" and off they all set, after a very cursory examination of the place.

Having ascended, and refreshed their courage with soda-water and ginger-beer, we drove to the Greenwich Railway, which we mounted, and found the trains of waggons with their engines ready to start. As the passage to Deptford and back, being two miles and a half each way, is performed in ten minutes, I proposed to the elder prince to make the trip, that he might say he had travelled on a railway. He was very shy of venturing, and asked a thousand questions about the danger, probability of accidents, and so forth; but at last, being persuaded to it by his brothers, and having had a place procured for him such as coincided with his notions of dignity, we took our seats and set off. He was very much interested and astonished; and admitted, on returning, that he was glad he had gone.

The questions put by the whole of them were numberless; and those of the Wali evinced, as they always do, a great deal of acuteness: yet, after all, I think they were as much amused at the appearance of a negress, very black indeed, who was standing at a doorway, fashionably clad in white, and wearing a light-coloured silk bonnet.

This evening we dined with Sir G. O., who had invited a very select and distinguished party to meet the princes, among whom were many of the ladies that had shown them attention at public places. The necessity of constant translation is at all times calculated to embarrass conversation; during dinner especially, where the parties must be considerably scattered: yet everything passed off extremely well, particularly in the evening, after the party went to tea and was joined by other visitors; and I wish I could recount to you all the pretty replies that were made to the fair questioners, and the truly oriental compliments which were liberally dealt around. Timour, in particular, attracted great attention; and certainly there is about him, when excited, a joyous *abandon* of manner tempered with a sweetness of tone which is exceedingly winning.

His few words of English too, begin to tell; and he could say to a lady, "*You very purty,*" (pretty,) in a very insinuating manner.. I was happy to see that this evening they made an exceedingly favourable impression in quarters where it was very desirable they should do so.

This night I became aware, for the first time, of an interesting military exhibition which was to take place in the neighbourhood of Chatham, and which it was thought their royal highnesses would be gratified by witnessing. It was the operation of throwing pontoon bridges over the Medway, and crossing a body of troops with extraordinary rapidity; and some very distinguished persons were to be among the spectators. We had but short time to prepare; but it was arranged that we should start about nine in the morning, with four horses, and post down to the scene of action. On arriving at the hotel, however, the whole arrangement was almost upset by a joyous surprise which there awaited the princes, in the shape of an immense budget of letters from their families, that had just arrived from Baghdad. Their joy was great and tumultuous, for the safe arrival of

the letters proved that the writers must be already in a place of safety; and I left them to enjoy the delight of perusing them at leisure.

In the morning, when I went to the hotel, I found that none of the princes had been in bed. They had sat up all night reading their voluminous correspondence. The news was far more favourable than they had ventured to anticipate. Their wives and families had been liberated by the Shah, without hurt or detriment. To such as chose to take service with him, he had assigned wages according to their several trusts; equal, as they admitted, to the appointments they had received under the Firmaun Firmaee. To others of the women, and younger branches, who remained, pensions had been granted; and those who did not wish to stay in Persia, had been freely permitted to go where they liked. This good news was not quite unmingled. It appeared that a good deal of money had been squeezed out of some members of their family; but when were ears, and noses, and eyes, nay, heads, safe before, under such circumstances, in Persia! Two of Timour Meerza's children had died; a matter which he

appeared to bear with great philosophy, although he said that one was beautiful as the full moon. A brother of the Wali's—that is, by the same mother—was also gone; and a number of princes of the other branches of the royal family had been sent to the state prison at Ardebeel, as these princes rather gratuitously assumed, to be poisoned! On the whole, however, they were well pleased with the contents of their letters, and with the conduct of their cousin the Shah; and the fact of their families having safely arrived at Baghdad had taken a great load of anxiety off their minds. They crowed a good deal at hearing that some of their own enemies, chiefs who had played the traitor to them, had fallen under the king's displeasure, and been handsomely scratched and squeezed by his majesty; and they followed up their triumph by a hope that he would end by shortening them by a head.

To men so occupied, a posting trip of near forty miles out and back, could not come very opportunely, and the prince would fain have given pontoons and all the go-by; but I represented to him that it would be uncourteous not

to accept the offer which had been made to him, and that it was a great pity to miss seeing a display which he might never have another opportunity of beholding. To this he immediately replied,—as indeed he generally does to any serious representation or remonstrance,—"Saheb Fraser says right; Timour Meerza, let us go; the Wali is not very well, and will remain behind and read the rest of these letters." So about half-past nine we started.

Nothing could have turned out much more unlucky than this trip, so far as pleasure was concerned. It was the 1st of July, a hot dusty day, with the wind in our backs; and, although we went through a beautiful country, the minds of the two princes were too much pre-occupied to attend to its charms. We bowled on at a pace so rapid that the motion alone might have prevented weariness of mind, yet they were both done up ere we reached Rochester. Here there was delay for want of horses, so that it was late ere we got to the ground, which was some six or seven miles further up the river Medway. Nor did the arrangements or display, when we reached the scene of operations, re-

compense them, in their opinion, for the fatigue they had undergone. There was no great crowd, no apparently considerable turn-out of troops, and, above all, there was no place or point constructed with seats,—no tent or booth from whence they could view the manœuvre at their ease, and, according to their ideas of propriety, without being themselves exposed either to the heat of the sun or gaze of the crowd; they were not even on horseback, to gallop from place to place in order to see to advantage what might be going on.

In fact, to construct such a station would have been impossible, as the manœuvres were to be repeated at several points where they could only be seen from a little distance; so we had just to do as others did, that is, to sit in our carriage and wait till the show should come our way.

All this was not well calculated to prepare their royal highnesses for appreciating the beauty of a military manœuvre involving no great show, and the nicety of which they were not themselves expert enough to comprehend. The pontoons were indeed rowed nearly to the very spot where our carriage stood; the bridge was

formed, and a regiment of cavalry, with some troops of the line, and a body of artillery, passed it, all in the space of twenty minutes: nothing could be more scientific, or correctly executed. But the princes, out of humour from the first, were quite disappointed. "*Ham-een ust? een che cheezee ust?*—Is this all? is this what it amounts to?" was the remark of the elder, when the movement was completed. "Is it for this you have taken all this trouble, and brought us forty miles from London, and forced us to disappoint poor Moluvee Mahomed Ismael Khan, whom we were to have dined with to-day at six?" "*Eh! cheezee pooch ust,*—it is a paltry affair," echoed Timour; "we can do at least as well as that in Persia."—"Can you?" said I; "as how, prince?"—"Why," replied he, "when we have to cross a river with an army, all we do is to kill a thousand sheep or goats. blow up their skins, form them into rafts, covered with branches of trees and earth, and, *Bismillah!* over we go." It was not the moment to remind them that a thousand sheep are not always at hand, and that wood is very scarce in Persia; that such a work would be the affair rather of days than of

minutes, when time might be of first-rate importance; and that, after all, the fabric would be a frail concern for the transport of a large body, with guns and baggage. They had seen enough, however; so we turned our carriage, and endeavoured to extricate ourselves from the crowd: but this was no easy matter; what with the march of troops, and the slow progress of other vehicles which preceded ours, our four horses were of no use, for we could only crawl. The prince, distressed by a head-ache, lay back, flushed and uncomfortable, in the coach. A lady in a neighbouring carriage, observing this, offered him a bottle of eau-de-Cologne, which he accepted gratefully, intending to use a little and return the rest: but scarcely had he got it, than, an opening occurring in the line, the postilions whipped their horses, and on we drove; so that, to his great distress, he had never an opportunity of returning either the bottle or his thanks to the owner.

At Rochester we were informed that we could have no horses until some of those which were then out should have come in and got rested. Perhaps it was a manœuvre to oblige

us to dine there; if so, it succeeded. Alas! poor Moluvee! no chance now of partaking of his feast; so we solaced ourselves with a bit of fish and cutlet, and a bottle of champagne, at the ——— Inn, Rochester, from whence we did not start till after six o'clock at night. The heat was so severe that the postilions could not at first urge their jaded beasts to the fullest posting speed; the animals could not stand it, a fact of which we soon witnessed a melancholy proof. On the ascent of a hill, a few miles on, we passed a carriage brought to a stand-still by one of the four horses having fallen down from over-exertion; and Timour Meerza, whose practised eye was quite aware of the poor animal's state, at once pronounced that it "had burst," *(trakeéd-ust,)* that is, it was blown to death, and never would rise again. I believe it never did. As the evening advanced, however, and the air cooled, we got on at a better pace; beat the "Tally-ho" coach, to Timour's great delight; and reached the hotel rather before ten at night.

On the succeeding day a party was made for them which promised to afford them greater satisfaction; Major W., who had been long in

Persia, invited them to come and spend the afternoon with him and a party of friends, all more or less conversant with the language, at his house upon the Thames at Putney. We arrived there about five; and the princes were delighted with the situation, the running stream, and the cool freshness of the air. "Vah! Vah!" said they, snuffing it up, and running from flower to flower like bees or butterflies, "who would live in London, with its dust, and its heat, and the eternal whirr! birr! jirr! of its streets, with their thousand carts and carriages, and uproar, when they could come to such a place as this? this is the true spot for a dwelling; here you have the full *Dil-goushâ*—the opening of the heart; one dies of pleasure here." But they preferred looking at the water to going upon it; for, when invited to enter a wherry and enjoy a row up the river a little way before dinner, they shrunk back, and the Wali said, "No, no,—no good, no good,—I no boat, no more boat, no more *Biscay!*" At length, however, they were persuaded to step in; and, after getting over their fears of the boat's upsetting, they could admire the view around them, and the delightful shade

of the trees on either side: then it was that their exclamations of pleasure broke forth; "Ah! there is the spot for us, there, just under these trees: now, a carpet on the grass, and plenty of good wine,—that is the way we should do in Persia; all night there now." They were all for quiet repose, for remaining where they were; and frequently said, "Are we not going too far?" But, when we opened Hammersmith suspension bridge, they were both surprised and charmed: "Ah! you have done well to bring us here," said they; "this was a thing to be seen; let us go close to it, and examine it;" and they did examine the bridge closely, and made many pertinent remarks on its construction, ending in a declaration that, if ever they went back to Persia, they would have such a bridge thrown over the river at Dalakee. They were, however, somewhat astounded and shaken in this noble resolution by hearing the cost of the bridge, and that it was every bit made of iron.

The dinner, to which we now returned, was a most pleasant but a most noisy one; I never heard such a clatter. The great men of Persia, especially the royal family, all speak loud; and

when in spirits, as they were now, there was no control to the exertion of their vigorous lungs. On the other hand, as every one of the company was forced to raise his voice in proportion, in order to be heard at all, and there were at least sixteen of us, you may have some faint conception of the uproar. But it was a very happy party; and the princes left it with regret, I believe, to go to a *soirée* at Countess C.'s, in M—— street, where a small party of the most select society of London were to be assembled.

The princes, in high spirits, appeared to great advantage, and varied their complimentary replics to the many questions that were asked in the most flowery style of the east. "How can we help being enchanted, when we are surrounded by the angels of Paradise?" was the usual return to the often-asked question of how they liked London. But to individuals the compliment was often even yet more direct. "Ask the prince what he thinks of this lady," said Lord B., leading up the beautiful Princess G. to a table where the Wali was standing: the Wali gazing at the fair form through his glittering though half-shut eyes, while a smile of strong

meaning gave a peculiar expression to his face, exclaimed, "She is a Hooree of Paradise, and these are the roses of heaven!" In short, there was no end of fine speeches; and, encouraged by the attention paid them by several of the ladies, they became so animated, and gazed so earnestly on some, particularly of the young ones, that I was too happy when an opportunity for withdrawing them occurred.

It is almost impossible to give you an idea of the uneasiness which I suffered on such occasions, conscious as I am of the comparative coarseness of feeling and ideas that exists in the mind even of the most polished Persian on all that regards females; but imagine the feelings of some fine lady, doomed to chaperone in fashionable company a set of uneducated country misses, by whose *gaucheries* she is continually afraid to be compromised, and you will pretty nearly comprehend mine.

On the 4th of July the princes were invited to one of the Duchess of B.'s splendid morning parties, and to witness a grand rowing-match from the terrace of M—— house, which overhangs the river. It was no easy

matter to get Timour Meerza detached from the gunsmith's shop, where he was superintending some matters of his own; and the eldest excused himself on the plea of indisposition. But at length the two youngest got themselves ready, and away we went. The scene was gay enough to have inspired the dullest with spirits, and the courteous attention of the noble host and hostess would have flattered the most fastidious; while assuredly, had they desired to mingle with and know the first and noblest of the land, their wish must have been gratified here: yet, I know not how it was, they were restless and unsatisfied; asked what was to be done,—what was to be seen. They seemed even not to comprehend the meaning of the boat-race when it came. They would not acknowledge the beauty of several of the most beautiful women in London, who were pointed out to them; and, after walking for a while hither and thither, they sat down quite out of spirits.

I tried them with refreshments, and three glasses of champagne produced a very salutary effect upon the Wali; but Timour Meerza was

quite worn out. He had repeatedly said, "Let us go;" and I was thinking of complying, when a certain lady of his acquaintance made her appearance, and instantly, like a pet dog, he sat down beside her, and commenced a conversation into which, as a matter of course, I was pressed. This lasted for nearly half an hour, during which it is impossible to tell how many fine things were said. "It is long since I have seen you," said the lady; "not since such and such a party: I hope you have been happy all that time." "Oh no," (in broken English,) "I not happy. I no look (see) you; I no happy; I no see you: very bad."—"The flowers I gave you, have you thrown them away?" "No, I keep them next my heart."—"When shall I give you more?" "To-morrow, every day."—"Will you keep a seat for me beside you at ——?" "If there is not one, you shall have mine. My head shall be your footstool!" &c. &c. But at length even this excitement failed; and although the Wali had at length opened his eyes, and acknowledged it to be the finest place he had seen in London, and wanted to stay and examine the beautiful house, with its statues and

other rarities, Timour Meerza was impatient to be back at his dear gunsmith's shop, which assuredly he would not at that moment have given for M—— house and all the galaxy of beauty he left there. So away we drove to Tatham's, where I gladly left them.

LETTER IX.

In spite of the riches and magnificence, and the signs of wealth and luxury which arrest the attention of all foreigners on their arrival in London, there is one remarkable defect, as it is by them esteemed, which attaches to the metropolis of England; and that is, the want of all appearance of royal state, or of those military and official ensigns of dignity which in almost all other countries mark the seat of government, and indicate the residence of the monarch. The riches and show of London is chiefly that of individuals; there are few emblems of state visible; and it is a custom, which is rather carried to affectation, to conceal all official appearances as much as possible under a plain and simple exterior. There are fewer red coats to be seen in London than in most provincial towns where troops are quartered.

The princes, and ministers, and *noblesse*, of England, though clothed with the highest dignities of the state, are met in the streets or the parks walking or riding like plain unpretending individuals; and as for the royal dwelling, Heaven knows! it would be difficult to find fault with its appearance on the score of excessive splendour.

Now as there is no people, the ruler of which assumes greater state and pomp, or who are so much attracted by outward appearances of power and greatness as the Persians, I was desirous to let these princes be aware, that though we did not lay so much stress upon what they well call the *Lebâs-u-Dowlut*,—the clothes or trappings of the state,—as they do, yet that we had the means, when occasion demanded, of making a show which would keep pace with, if not outshine, all they could boast of. It was in vain that we explained to them that in this country it was not as in Persia, where the king represents not only the government, but the nation,—where all are slaves, whose lives and fortunes are at his will. That here the king was literally the father of his people, with power to rule and punish only according to laws

which gave equal rights to all men; and that therefore his majesty considered himself but as one of the nation, and lived among it as a father does among his children. They said they comprehended all this; but it was evident that something like misconception, if not contempt, attended the ideas they had formed; and I was very desirous to put them right upon the subject. To do this, it was necessary to give them some notion of the manner in which his majesty did really live. There is nothing on which the Persians, and these very princes among them, are given to be so eloquent as on the riches and grandeur of their own monarch,—the style of his living, the number and respectability of his attendants, the splendour of his palaces and their furniture. Now, of these,—having seen all of the sort that had any pretensions to be worth seeing in Persia,—I could speak and judge as well as they; and I knew well that the sight of one of the royal palaces of England, with the establishment annexed to it, must reduce their recollections of their own to a sadly diminished standard. The splendour of Persian palaces consists in quantities of

tawdry gilding, painting, and enamel, with an infinite multitude of little mirrors, inlaid work of glass, painted glass windows, and a whole crystal-shop of lustres, lamps, vases, and fancy ornaments of cut-glass. Nothing more frippery can be imagined; and, although the first effect be rich and glittering, it will not bear inspection. I was therefore anxious that they should see a truly royal palace; and as our gracious sovereign had evinced a great desire that these distinguished foreigners should receive every possible attention, it was arranged that Windsor should be shown to them. But, as circumstances prevented the king receiving them in person, a day was selected when his majesty was absent in London.

On the day appointed, accordingly, we got under weigh a little before nine in the morning; and, taking up Sir G. O., proceeded on our way with all the comforts of an easy carriage and four. The air, cooled by the last night's rain, was delicious; and, the distance not being great enough to occasion weariness of mind, the princes enjoyed their drive very much. Entering the great gate, the carriage drove at once

into the fine court of the castle, the appearance of which is very imposing; and the order in which every thing is kept, so very opposite to the slovenly state of even royal courts in Persia, made its due impression on my charges.

At the entrance we were met by Sir A. Barnard and Sir J. Wyattville, who did the honours to their royal highnesses; and we soon proceeded to view the castle. The great hall of St. George, one of the grandest apartments that can be imagined, met with but languid applause; the princes did not comprehend its beauties: but the armoury beyond was more admired, although Timour objected very much to the form and unwieldiness of the ancient spears, and could not imagine how men with their faces covered with armour could fight at all.

The tapestry in the next suite excited their applause still more; and when informed that these pictures were all done by needlework, or *woven*, as they expressed it, they could not contain their astonishment. "This is more wonderful," said they, "than anything we have seen yet,—more wonderful than London!" meaning

the Panorama of London at the Coliseum, which till then had been their standard of the wonderful and excellent.

The library gave them little pleasure,—they gave it the general expression of their satisfaction which the whole received; but the state drawing-rooms called forth their most unqualified admiration. They were astounded at their richness. "Nothing can be found to surpass this," was their reply to my question of how they liked them; "magnificence can go no higher." But their surprise and delight were at their height at being taken through the private apartments, with their exquisite furniture both useful and ornamental; and the great gallery, with its pictures and infinite and most gorgeous contents. Some of the granite and malachite vases were greatly admired; but I am not certain that a fine old cabinet of carved black wood, with very rich and ingenious fitting-up, did not surprise and please them as much as anything. The plate, particularly the gold service, made a strong and palpable impression on them, as was to be expected from so large a visible mass of precious materials; but their

fancy was most attracted by the humai, which had once hovered over the head of Tippoo Sultan, and the gold and jewelled tiger-head footstool of that monarch, which were also in the plate-room.

But that which gave them far more gratification than all the splendour and magnificence they had seen, was the gracious and most kind attention of her majesty the queen, who met them, as it were, by chance, attended by some of her ladies, in one of the suites, and remained to receive their salutation and honour them with her notice. Her majesty addressed to the princes several inquiries, and remained for a considerable time conversing regarding them with Sir G. O. It was a kindness as well bestowed as delicately paid; for their royal highnesses left her majesty most deeply impressed with gratitude, and with a sense of her goodness and benevolence.

When our inspection of the castle was finished, we all partook of a luncheon, provided for the princes, which they washed down with excellent champagne. After which the party proceeded in two of the royal carriages, very attentively

provided for the purpose, to drive through the park. On the way we stopped to examine the beautiful church, the exquisite carved wooden work of which excited much admiration. Indeed, I have remarked, on more than one occasion, that this sort of ornament has attracted more notice from them than work in richer materials. But they were very strongly impressed by the monument to the late lamented Princess Charlotte, whose story called forth many expressions of sorrow, for they remembered having heard of it in Persia; and they fully entered into the sculptor's idea of the soul escaping towards heaven from the mortal remains which lie mute and motionless below. They had been, also, pleased with the statue of George the Fourth, which stands on the landing-place of the great staircase; but were not a little confounded at hearing of its price, (£4,000,) which, turned into Persian tomauns, appeared to them an enormous sum.

In driving through the noble park, which it might have been thought would have kept all their attention alive, they evinced little pleasure. Their minds were, in fact, fatigued; and the good meal they had made weighed down

their bodies, so that the Wali fairly wrapped himself in his cloak and went to sleep; nor did he wake until, reaching the lake, he was roused by the cackling of the geese and other water-fowl. On pausing to look at the cascade, he remarked that in his government of Bebahan there were many such things, and that the country very much resembled that they were driving through; a remark which affords a specimen of his correctness of observation in such things. But the recollection roused him, so that he was ready to be pleased with the view looking over Virginia Water from the Saluting battery, where we halted.

It was with the fishing station, however, the Chinese house and the tents, and the sweet shaven lawn and gardens, that they were most enchanted. "Ah!" exclaimed the eldest, "this is what we Persians delight in; here are our own roses! Look, Wali, look, Timour Meerza —just see here! *Ai-Wahi, ai-Wahi!* The smell goes to my very heart;" and away they all ran, and hurried from bush to bush, petting each rose as if it were a living favourite. "Ah! now is just the time when we should be coming

out from the *anderoon*, to sit upon the green grass and take our wine. Here we should have the *sáz*, (musical instruments,) and there we should seat ourselves. Come, Saheb Fraser; come here, and sit down Persian fashion!" and down squatted the prince without more ado, pulling me down after him. "Alas! alas!" chimed in the Wali; "just so did I use to do in the jungles of Bebahan, when I was taking an army of fifteen thousand foot and five thousand horse against the Buchtiarees. *Ai-Wahi!* how the day did pass! And then we would get a lamb or a kid, and cut him up upon the spot, and have such kebaubs. *Behisht!* it was paradise!"

"Yes, prince," said I; "and while all this was going on,—while the very bit was in your mouth,—up come a parcel of these same Buchtiarees in your rear to trouble your repast; then where go your fine kebaubs, and your feast, and your *khoosh-goozeranee*—your light-hearted enjoyment?" "*Ah! be-jehannum;* all to the d—l!—then it is sword in hand, and fight for it. But what then? Such a country! such fruits! such grapes! you might then have had as much as an ass could carry of the finest

askeree (stoneless, or sultana) grapes for twopence. I was once encamped with ten thousand men in a place—such a place! but it was an enemy's country, where it was our duty to destroy things, you know;—and destroy we did. How every man revelled in grapes! he gave them to his horse, he trampled them under foot; and we stayed there many days. *Wullah! billah!* by all that is good, when we left it you would have said that, except just where we stood, there had not been a bunch touched."

Their delight with the noble trees and rich verdure of this magnificent park, and the expression of their admiration, once awakened, continued throughout the rest of our drive: yet I was not sorry when we returned to the castle, where a most comfortable repast of tea and refreshments gave rest to mind and body, as well as strength for the journey home; for, what with exercise and excitement, they were quite exhausted.

Liqueurs were offered, and I accepted them for the princes; for the Wali had already observed, that the *keyf*, or excitement of the champagne, had gone off, and left behind the

listlessness of collapse. I recommended him a glass of the liqueur. "Has it *keyf?*" said he. "Try," replied I. He took it accordingly; and in a quarter of an hour after he turned to me, with a countenance of infinite complacency, and said, "You were right; it has keyf, and has done me good."

At half-past six we took leave of our most kind entertainers in the palace, and had a very pleasant drive home, during which the princes were very communicative; and many were the observations regarding all that they had seen, and comparisons between its grandeur, and the palaces and pleasures of their own country: all of which, if I could have remembered and recorded it, would not be without its interest; but, like many other matters, it passed away without my being able to commit it either to memory or to paper.

On the following day, the 7th of July, we had three evening engagements, — to Astley's with a party of their friends, to a private party, and to a ball: fortunately, we had a clear forenoon. It was with "mickle toil" that the Meerza and myself got them to sit down to

dinner at half-past four, as we were engaged to be at the house of Sir G. O. at half-past five: but to make them eat, was beyond our power; the eldest swore he was not hungry, and could not. "It is not every one who has got his appetite in his hand like you," said he to me, as he saw me doing justice to the good viands even at that unusually early hour. We kept our appointment, however, to within a quarter of an hour; and the party, a large one, having assembled, we all went merrily to the theatre.

We had all expected a good deal of amusement from seeing the impression of the remarkable performances at Astley's upon the princes; and Mr. Ducrow, having been informed of their intention to "honour the amphitheatre with their presence," had engaged to do his best; yet at first we were disappointed. The piece represented was Lalla Rookh, which, though brilliant and bustling, did not greatly elicit their admiration. They laughed contemptuously when told that all this was meant to represent scenes in India and Khorasan, and in their own country, the south of Persia; and scarcely seemed to enter

into the little spirit which the piece really has. We thought that the horsemanship which it contains would be attractive; but, when the horses did make their appearance, their movements were cramped and constrained, and the fighting was so miserably tame that it must have been consummately ridiculous in the eyes of men who had seen plenty of the reality: there never was anything so absurd as the cool *poke* of a spear by which Prince Feramurz disposes of his rival, the Tartar hero. The tableaux, representing the acceptance of the Peri's offering, and the *dénouement* of the story of the Veiled Prophet, though fair enough in themselves, were strangely foisted into the piece, and perfectly unintelligible to the princes. It was only at the last, when a skirmish was conducted with something more of bustle and vigour, and one or two persons were struck down, that Timour Meerza was roused from his contemptuous apathy, and called out, "Hah! *Barikillah!* that was well done, that is something like the thing; it puts me in mind of my own work in Iran."

But the scene changed, when the rope-dancing and tumbling commenced. That was excellent

of its kind, and the princes were delighted; I thought the youngest would have split his sides with laughing at the imitation of the Bedouin Arab tumblers, which certainly was most extraordinary. "*Wullah!* that cannot be a child that they are twisting so about? it is surely a make-believe child," said he aloud, as he was gazing at the incomprehensible movements of a most astonishing human being, scarcely beyond the period of infancy; and I shall not easily forget the expression of mingled amazement and amusement which his countenance exhibited when he became convinced of the creature's reality. "And what, in the name of goodness, is this going to be?" said he, as two of the rope-dancers appeared behind a crescent among opening clouds at the further end of the stage. His question was answered by their walking up certain ropes that were fixed to the upper gallery, till they reached it far above the heads of the audience; and then, retreating backwards to whence they came, were hid from view in real clouds of smoke and fire from a great discharge of fireworks. The horrible smell which these, united with the gas, produced, turned many of the ladies half-

sick, and made all hold their noses or have recourse to smelling-bottles. I remarked this to Timour Meerza, who was sitting just before me with the glow of delight still bright on his countenance, and asked him whether he did not dislike the smell. "*Tcha ha!*" exclaimed he, "what should make me care about it? It may be bad for these ladies, who do not know what gunpowder is; let them take lavender-water; I like it. But it is villanous bad gunpowder too," added he, a moment after, as he snuffed up the infernal mixture of gases, with a grimace which showed that it touched even his organs of sense in a manner which was anything but pleasant.

The horsemanship gave them quite as much delight: but, of all the feats performed, I think they were most pleased with the dancing of a lady and her horse, which first waltzed with her on its back, in good time, to the tunes that were played, and then danced to her on foot, setting and *vis-à-vis*ing away at a great rate as she directed its movements with a whip. They came away declaring that the show was altogether a right good one; and the discussions which fol-

lowed regarding these wonderful riders, and the speculations as to whether they could perform in fair field the same feats which they executed in the theatre, convinced me that the impression produced was in reality a strong one. But they were, as usual, so exhausted by their excitement, that they insisted upon having tea at Mivart's, before proceeding to Lady T. R.'s evening party; and the elder prince, in spite of its being the *Shub-e-jumah*, or evening preceding their week's holiday, (Friday,) on which they never like to drink wine, ordered a bottle of champagne to wind them up for what was yet to come.

The constitutional difference, both moral and physical, between Orientals and Europeans, would form a curious subject of speculation. In their physical conformation, although they seem capable of undergoing nearly or quite as much bodily fatigue as Europeans, it would also seem that their strength is more of a passive than an active character. The European has more firmness and rigidity of fibre with which to struggle; the Oriental more flexibility of muscle and adaptation to endure. The for-

mer has a strong hold of life, tugs hard to retain it, and parts with it difficultly. In the latter, life seems more loosely bound up with his earthy tabernacle, and is easily shaken out of it. Yet he escapes by yielding to the blast, and offering less stubborn opposition, where the other would be torn up. Thus, in the physical conformation of each, there are qualities which compensate for their respective deficiencies, or nearly so; but in the mental constitution this is less obvious. The Oriental is, indeed, more quick and apt at inquiry than the European: but he seems to want the solid basis on which to fix those acquirements; and, above all, he is far more subject to mental languor, and cannot endure a long exertion of the intellect, whether for painful or pleasurable objects. Of course, I speak in a very general sense, and without reference to the degrees and shades which are occasioned by difference of nation, climate, customs, and other operating causes, and only state what appears to me the fact; and which—to return to the subject which occasioned this digressive flight—accounts for the inferior powers of enduring a long continuance of even plea-

surable excitement, which I have remarked in these princes. Let us also now proceed to Lady T. R.'s.

We reached M——d-street late, and the greater part of the company had already departed; but they met with a very kind reception, and the two younger soon ensconced themselves on sofas, with some of the most attractive young ladies by their side. The elder remained conversing in a more general way with that part of the company who were standing near him. It was interesting to observe how the progress in knowledge of English customs displayed itself in the introductions to new acquaintances, which constantly occurred. They had remarked that shaking hands was one of our modes of salutation, yet had not become aware of the degree of familiarity it implied. So, whenever a lady, young or old, was presented, the hand was immediately proffered, and the new friend, particularly if fair and attractive, urged with courteous look and gentle force to take her seat beside them. In Persia, to be asked by a prince to sit in his presence is a high distinction; but to sit by his

side is the height of honour; so that the intention was at least kind and courteous, however strangely it might seem expressed to our country-women. Then began the intercourse of broken words and signs, and a shower of compliments, not always well selected, which it was very difficult to translate in such a manner as to maintain a suitable degree of delicacy, and yet retain the original meaning or allusion. Often enough was I at my wits' end to do this; and the repetition of this exertion, night after night, was so tiresome as quite to destroy the interest which an unconcerned bystander would doubtless have taken in what was going on.

But the pleasure-seeking duties of the night were not yet at an end; the princes had engaged to go to a ball at Lady B. P.'s in Cumberland-street, and about midnight we arrived there. The rooms were crowded to excess, and it was with much difficulty that we fought our way through the living mass to a little room at the end of the suite, which at that time had not half a dozen persons in it, and was comparatively cool and pleasant. "Ah! this will do for you, prince," observed I to him, as

we entered; "it is *khelwut* (private)."—"Yes," replied he, "it is so now; but when they know that the *Khirs-e-Dushmunzearee* is here, you will see it filled fast enough. Come, let us take a seat while we can get it." The prince was right: in they came by twos and threes, stared, and went away; but there were some of their old acquaintances who remained, and the sight of whom made the princes feel more at home. In a little time, came the pretty Mrs. L. S., who soon attracted the notice of the Wali. He discovered that she had a vast deal of *nameck* (salt); and a spirited conversation, if such the broken terms and signs could be called, immediately commenced between them. The lady made many inquiries about his wives and family; about the beauty of Persian women; asked what were the causes of their odious treatment in being locked up by the men; what he thought of English ladies, &c. &c.: to all of which the Wali replied in a tone of sportive raillery not unsuited to the occasion. While this was passing on one sofa, the elder prince, who had been introduced to a handsome Spanish lady, was sitting with her on the opposite one,

endeavouring to make his few words of English tell: but this was no easy matter, as his fair companion only spoke French, so that I had to manage three languages at once,—a matter at no time easy; and they pressed me so hard that I was obliged to call for mercy, and to declare that, not being able to divide myself into halves, they must go on at a slower rate. The elder prince poured out a most pathetic lamentation to his fair companion regarding his ignorance of Spanish, which prevented his having the full enjoyment of her conversation; to which the lady replied that she was in a like predicament, not only with regard to Persian, but to English, of which she, too, was quite ignorant. "Ah! then," said he, "we should be brother and sister, since we are both strangers in a foreign country, and in the same distress." The lady smiled graciously. In like manner, when Timour's friend Mrs. W. L. introduced her brother to him, "Is that your brother?" asked he. "Then he must be mine, too; for here," taking hold of the lady's hand, and turning to her brother,—"here is one that is my well-beloved sister."

When the Wali's new acquaintance, Mrs. L. S., rose from her seat to go, he looked after her for some time with his keen little grey eyes, which, like his whole countenance, were radiant with pleasure; and then, turning to his elder brother, "*Dâdaish*" (their familiar name for their elder and superior brother,)—"*Dâdaish,*" said he, "what would Moollah —— say if he were here to-night?"— "Who is Moollah ——?" asked I. —"Oh! Moollah —— is a Sheerauzee," replied the Wali, "who loves to look at beautiful women, the old villain! Do you remember, *Dâdaish*, how he used to make his wives ask all the women of their acquaintance to the house, and hide himself in the balcony of the reception-room, and look down upon them as they sat and amused themselves? *Wullah!* if he were here, he would faint! Even we, who are used to see crowds of the finest women, what an effect has it upon us! *Wullahi Billahi!* it is enough to take away our senses; come, let us be going." And go we did; and, after pushing our way through the crowd we soon got into the carriage, worn-out and weary enough.

LETTER X.

On the 8th, the princes were entertained by Lord G. who had a distinguished party to meet them. The conversation was very animated; and, as there were two persons who could interpret besides myself, it was well maintained by all the three. It chanced that I sat next to Timour Meerza, whose genius being all for field sports and war, the conversation at this part of the table naturally took that turn. The story of his killing the lion at Shahpore, in the king's presence, was mentioned; and from thence arose some observations on the difficulty of taming lions, and the danger of keeping them as pets. "I had a strong proof of that myself," said Timour; "for I had once a pet lion, which I kept till it was between two and three years old. It was quiet enough, because it got enough to eat: but, having heard that no lion can bear

to be disturbed while at food, I was determined to try the experiment; and one day, when it was eating, I went and caught it by the tail and drew it away from its meal. The lion turned round in a great passion, whisked his tail out of my hand, and tried to get a hold of me with his teeth. I got him by the throat to preserve myself, and then we began a wrestling match. He got me under, and I began to think it was all over with me, but I still kept my gripe of his throat, and that began to tell; for, when he was half strangled, he fell, and I got on the top of him, and began to kick and beat him as well as I could. There was luckily a stick within reach, and, getting hold of it, I belaboured him till I was tired and he was completely cowed; and ever from that time he knew his master, and trembled when he saw me, whether at meals or not." The animation with which he told this curious story, which was done with a simplicity that vouched for its truth, gave great amusement to his hearers, and I wished it had been possible for them to have understood the full point of all he said; but he

was so voluble when excited that no translator could keep pace with him.

His hunting anecdotes were numberless, and it put one in mind of the days of old to hear him describe a *chasse*, where three or four thousand men were turned out to hunt the wild-boar; where a whole district was driven, as in the chase of the deer, by our own ancient kings or powerful barons; where three hundred boars and sows were slaughtered, and ninety out of four hundred dogs, with some score of men, were killed in the attack. He described a day's sport in a plain near Kerman, where a prodigious number of antelopes were assembled; and he and another prince, his cousin, took out a thousand horsemen to pursue them. There had been a great rain, so that the soil of the plain was converted into mud, to such a depth that the slender legs of the antelope stuck and entangled the animal, while the more vigorous and longer limbs of the horse bore him through it: the consequence was a great slaughter; many hundreds of deer were put to death, so that the whole army were fed with venison; and they

desisted from the carnage as much from remorse as from weariness.

Another of his anecdotes was of a different description; but I do not recollect whether it was on this day he told it; nor is it so much to his credit, though strongly characteristic of his countrymen, and of the savage impatience of the young Kajar princes. Devoted to the chase, he was passionately fond of all that belonged to that amusement, particularly of horses, dogs, and hawks. Of the last he had many favourites of all descriptions. One day he was hawking the mountain partridge, somewhere near Sheerauz, and had flown a very favourite Gos-Hawk at one of these animals, which was crossing a ravine. The hawk had struck the partridge, and was coming with it to the ground, when Timour heard a rush, and saw a dark body borne through the air from behind him. It was a huge black eagle, which had been sitting on a crag above; and which made a stoop, and, trussing both hawk and partridge at once, bore them away in its talons to a neighbouring height across the ravine. In vain the prince shouted and hallooed, the eagle

kept its prize; and when the prince, and such of his people who were near, reached the place where the eagle had been sitting, they found but the head of the poor hawk, and part of her golden ornaments.

Timour was in a dreadful rage, and swore to be revenged,—to make the eagle pay dearly for his dinner that day; so, calling for the chief huntsman and hawk-keeper, he gave orders to search the country for the murderer, and to take him alive, cost what it might, and bring him to the presence. Accordingly the country was turned out, this great black eagle watched, his haunts discovered; and, in due time, his aërial majesty was brought, tied feet and wings, to the presence of his judge. The prince happened to be seated at a feast, or rather at a drinking party, with some of his brothers and cousins. These drinking parties are, as I have before observed, no joke; the quantity of wine and of spirits drunk is enormous, and the excesses often committed in consequence are proportionally gross. I do not remember exactly how the murderer was identified; I think it was by some of the unfortunate hawk's gear

found in or near his haunt: be that as it may, the first thing they did was to pour wine and spirits down its throat, till it was as drunk as they. The next day, when similarly engaged, the prince ordered in the furoshes, who, putting the poor bird's feet in the *felleck*, like a person who is to receive the bastinado, beat it till all its claws were broken and bloody. I will not proceed to describe the process by which, night after night, it was tortured and destroyed piece-meal, until at length death put an end to its sufferings: but Timour Meerza told the whole story with a glee that showed he only thought he had been exacting a suitable revenge for an irreparable injury.

After dinner the conversation turned upon their journey to London, which gave the princes an opportunity of describing their sufferings at sea. Something was then said about providing a passage for them on their return by a better vessel, which drew from the Wali a sarcastic remark, that no doubt, if the English government desired to get rid of them altogether, such would be the very way to do it; as another such voyage would certainly termi-

nate their sufferings and their lives: the intentions, therefore, of their English friends would be known, he said, by such a proposition. All this only confirmed what I felt assured of from the first, that they never would voluntarily trust themselves again on salt-water.

July 9th.—Whether it arose from lassitude attendant upon the continual excitement of the nights, or the strong constraint of original habit, the princes became still more indolent than at first during the day. The elder retired to his room regularly after breakfast, and employed himself in some trifling sedentary amusement. The Wali went fairly to bed: Timour alone kept the drawing-room, where he sat trying to copy engravings, in order to teach himself to draw, or flirted occasionally with some of the females of the house; but his favourite resort was the gunsmith's shop. This day, when I called with the intention of taking them to the Diorama, I found the Wali sound asleep; the elder prince engaged in looking over plans and estimates for a forcing-pump which he wanted to take out to Nejeff, to supply that holy place with water; and Timour preparing

for his favourite haunt. Thither I accompanied him, and he remained nearly an hour trifling and playing with sundry pistols and swords, and revelling in the sight of the number of those instruments that were placed before him. It was with difficulty I got him at last to the Diorama, where we arrived just at the time when the church of Santa Croce was represented as at midnight; and it was so dark, that our unaccustomed eyes could perceive nothing. The prince was taken all by surprise. "Tcha-ha! what sort of a show is this?" said he, as he stumbled to a seat by the help of some of the attendants. "I am blind surely, not a thing do I see; what is the meaning of this? are there people near us? I hear voices, but I can't discover the speakers." In fact, it was not until the gradual change represented in the picture threw light upon the subject, and our optics had adapted themselves to the darkness, that we were able to make out the church. The prince had but just time to comprehend the scene, and to express his astonishment at the optical deception,—for he was aware that it was but a pic-

ture,—when the bell rung, and the church was slowly hid from our view by the revolving of the machinery.

A new source of wonder was now revealed: the curtain rose, and discovered the valley of Sarnin deep in snow, and the village of Alagna sleeping in the calm moonlight; it was a scene wonderfully true to nature. A storm came on, —the wind arose, we heard it whistle,—heard the roar of the avalanches,—saw the morning break, and disclose the catastrophe of the night —the destruction of the village. The prince was amazed, as well he might be. "A *little* show do you call this?" said he; "you promised me a little show, and this is the finest and most wonderful you have yet taken me to. *Afereen! Afereen!* this cannot be a picture; it must be reality!" In the same manner was he delighted with the illumination in the church; and the mysterious appearance and disappearance of the congregation struck him with so much amazement that he knew not what to say; and he left the place declaring that this was the most astonishing thing he had yet witnessed of all the London wonders.

On coming out of the Diorama I wished to show him a little of the country, and ordered the carriage to Hampstead; but I had often cause to remark how little they were struck by what we consider rich and attractive scenery, and such was the case to-day: before we were half-way to the heath Prince Timour became sleepy, and requested that the carriage should take him home. So home he went.

Next day, July 10th, the princes were entertained by Sir J. H. and met at his house with a very delightful party, among whom they very soon found themselves at home. Indeed, they had now become so much accustomed to the usages of English society as to have lost a good deal of the constraint which at first they could not but feel, though far from having caught the spirit of our manners, so as to put me at perfect ease regarding their behaviour in all cases. They were this day all pleasantly placed, and kept their interpreters fully employed; although with little more than a repetition of the questions, answers, and compliments that had been used on a dozen other occasions.

The elder prince, who was seated beside an ex-

ceedingly pretty and agreeable young lady, became more animated than usual, and was, I am convinced, very sincere in his expressions of admiration. He requested to know the lady's name, and, being told it was Charlotte, he said, "I know three Charlottes then, but you are preferable to them all."

In the evening the party was increased, and there was some excellent music; and Miss H. V. the young lady admired by the prince, sang some delightful airs. The Wali and Timour sat themselves down close by the instrument, and listened with the greatest attention; but the fair singer herself was far more the object of attraction than the music, for, on my asking the former how he liked the air she was singing, he plied, "*Khoodish khylee behtur ust*, —'she herself is far better;" and both of them declared that she was "full of salt,"— i. e. of that beauty of expression so valued by them. They then got to a table, and began to write scraps of poetry for several of the company who desired to have such memorials; and found themselves so much at home, that there was scarce any getting them away, although they had an evening engage-

ment at the house of the Wali's friend, Mrs. L. S. It was near midnight when they arrived there; and an active flirtation was kept up with several both of old and new acquaintance for an hour or more, after which we all gladly retreated to our homes.

July 11.

Engagements were now so abundant that the princes might have been every night at three or four parties; but this they were not up to, and to most invitations they sent excuses. This night, however, they went to a small and select party at the Countess of E.'s, where they met many of their lady acquaintances, and soon got each comfortably seated with their own little circle around them. This was just what they liked, and they only wanted language to render them completely happy. One lady, and a very delightful person, singular enough to say, had picked up a little Persian, and the elder prince insisted on entertaining her. Lady D. S. endeavoured to make the Wali reply to her questions; and Timour, after a little general flirtation, attached himself to Miss R. an exceedingly pretty and lively young lady,

who responded with spirit to his gallant demonstrations, so that the poor interpreters had again a sore time of it. The compliments flew thick, 'and home ones many of them were. "Ah!" said Miss R. in reply to some fine thing which Timour had said, "tell him he is too full of compliments; I fear he is nothing else."—"By your own head, and by my death!" said he earnestly, "nothing of the sort — what would you have? I only say what I think, and that is the truth. If I were to say you were *not* beautiful; that your eyes were *not* superb, and your mouth *not* lovely; that you were *not* full of expression and animation,—would it be truth? You know it would not. I say what I say, because so it is." Of course, there was no resisting such a protestation; and the complimentary truths of Prince Timour were graciously, though laughingly, accepted.

This young lady having retired, the young man, whose laughter and good-humour had attracted much attention, was next surrounded by three or four ladies, who all besieged him with questions. "What is he laughing at?" said one of them, seeing the prince smile at

something which had been said and interpreted to him. "What can I do but smile," said he, "surrounded as I am by such beauties—such houries of paradise? must I not be pleased? If you want me to look grave, or to cry, set me among old and ugly women, if there be any such to be found; you will see no laughing then."—"Oh! then," said a middle-aged, but still very pretty woman, "if that is the case, I must keep away; I don't want to see you cry; we old ones must not approach you."—"Old!" said he, looking earnestly at the lady, "not a bit of you; on the contrary, you are very pretty, and you know you are so! Why do *you* say you are old?" At which there was another laugh, and then more compliments; and so the evening fared on till it was time to hie homewards.

LETTER XI.

July 13.—THE princes have agreed to sit to Mr. Partridge, the well-known artist, for their pictures. When the proposal was made, I questioned whether they would agree; but to my comfort, as it proved, not only were they pleased at the idea, but have taken a great fancy for going over and sitting with Mr. Partridge, which is of much service in dissipating, in an easy way, the ennui which they feel, and which they have not spirits or energy enough to drive away by going out to see the various objects of curiosity which merit their attention in London. The sketches of two of the princes have already been made, and excellently characteristic and spirited they are.

The princes had been invited by her royal highness the Duchess of Kent to attend her evening party at Kensington this night; but, in

order to pass the forenoon, I asked them to go and look at one or two exhibitions. The elder prince excused himself; but the Wali and Timour Meerza accepted the proposal, and off we drove. Remembering the delight of the former at seeing the wax figures in the hair-dressers' shops, I took them first to Madame Tussaud's wax-works, nor was I disappointed in the effect which I expected this would produce. On entering the room, the first figures that struck the eye were Fieschi and his infernal machine on the right-hand, and Sir Robert Peel on the left; the first they passed without notice, supposing him to be one of the attendants of the room engaged in some work or other. The attitude of Sir Robert arrested their attention; but it was not till approaching, and asking who he was, that their doubts were awakened: they started back with a stare of astonishment and hesitation; "What! is it not a man? *Ullah!* what story is this? *een che cheezee ust?*" and they stood gaping and looking, first at the figure, and then around them. "*Ullah-hu-akbet!*—God is great! and this too," turning to Fidschi, "perhaps this is not a man neither? Oh yes, it is; but he does not move.

What is he doing? *Ullah! Ullah!*" I permitted it to work, and they got half frantic; they looked into and examined each figure, and each was a new subject of wonder and inquiry: they could not believe their own eyes when they were told that the eyes which stared on them from the wax were not real. They walked about, and then stood still and looked around them, as if constantly expecting something to happen,—as if the figures should start into life and destroy the illusion.

They were greatly struck with the first large group, representing the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor Alexander, Napoleon, Duke of Wellington, &c. at Shoenbrunn, I believe: but the common and single figures, such as Hare and Burke, I think, surprised them yet more; the illusion in these was more perfect. They were much delighted with the beauty of Mary Queen of Scots, and with the figure of a sleeping child, and a few others; but the one of all others which astonished and even startled them most was the figure of old Madame Tussaud herself, who stands, "spectacles on nose," at the feet of a sleeping figure in black. This sleeping lady

first attracted their notice, and, on looking up, they observed Madame T. apparently watching them; but, taking her for a living person, they paid her no attention; when, a recollection of their first error coming across the Wali's mind, he looked again, and perceiving her perfect stillness, he went up, examined it, and cried out, "And this too is not a living creature! *Ullah-hu-akber!*"

On quitting the place the Wali said, "Now, let us play *Dádaish* a trick: we are to go and see the *Malikeh* (the princess) to-night; let us take him here first, and tell him this is the Malikeh's *durbar*,—*Wullah!* he will believe it; it is like magic. *Murg-e-tu!*—by your death! by the head of the prince!" continued he, turning to me with great earnestness, "let us do this; don't laugh, keep your countenance, and you will see sport." I promised acquiescence, and away we next went to show the Wali the Diorama, which, though now familiar to Timour Meerza, was new to the other; and the former enjoyed by anticipation the effect on his brother.

We entered, as before, when the church re-

presented midnight. "What is the use of this?" said the Wali, after rubbing his eyes for a few minutes; "this is no show; I am choked here; come, let us go!"—"Have patience for a while," we said; and soon the artificial illumination began to appear. "What is all this?" said the Wali; "are these candles?"—"To be sure," said we; "and don't you see the *mujlis* (assembly or congregation) in chairs sitting there?" He pulled out his little opera-glass, and saw them. "And how far now," said I, "should you think it may be from where you sit, to that door there, at the bottom, where you see the light?"—"What can I say?" replied he; "perhaps one hundred paces, —at least that." He was confounded to hear that it was not more than eight or ten, and still more so when told that all he saw was merely the effect of colours on a flat surface. "*Ullah-hu-akber!*" exclaimed he, "it is impossible! And if I were to throw this orange at that door now, would it hit the curtain?"—"Certainly," said I. He replied only with a bewildered groan, and muttered in a whining voice, "*Cheme dânum!*—What do I know!"

His astonishment did not diminish when

the darkness recommenced; and afterwards, when the dawn of morning discovered the church empty and the figures gone, the deception, in point of space, was greater in the grey cold morning light than before, and his bewilderment was proportionally great. The black curtain, which now hangs before each picture, and conceals it until the circular movement of the machinery has brought the spectator full in front, is a great improvement on the former mode, by which the pictures came awkwardly and sideways before him; yet the first view of the village did not appear to strike the Wali much. But as the night wore on, and the wind whistled, the snow fell, the lights went out, and the avalanches roared, he became highly excited, and evinced a full feeling of the wonderful reality of the thing. He could not, indeed, very well comprehend the need of the great obscurity that overwhelms the whole scene; but was very much delighted with the appearance of morning, which comes on with a wonderful truth of colouring and effect. "And where is the village?" said one of the princes. "Under the ice," replied one of the Persian servants behind, who had accom-

panied us into the place : " and look ! there is the *kell-e-minar*,—(the *skull*, or head of the steeple)—left alone above it."—" Ah !" observed another of the servants ; " look at these planks, how admirably they are done."—" Done !" repeated the other, " they are wood, nothing else; I swear it is wood."—" Well," said the Wali, drawing a long breath as we left the place, " this beats even the picture of London ; this is a show worth seeing: have you any more like this to show us ?"—" Ay, prince, a dozen of sights as good, if you would only sleep less, and rouse yourself to go and see them."—" It can't be true," said he ; " there can be nothing more so good as this."

I dined with them to-day, that I might keep them in order as to time ; and the two younger ones were full of anxiety for the success of their intended joke. Accordingly, a little after eight, out we sallied, the elder prince in the full assurance that he was about to be presented to the veritable Princess Victoria, future Queen of England. The wax-work exhibition is lighted up every evening, the knowledge of which, in fact, first suggested the idea of the joke, and the room is spacious and good ; but I must own that the

entrance did not much savour of the splendour of royalty, nor would the bills of Madame Tussaud have appeared to practised eyes as perfectly suitable *affiches* to the gates of an English princess, any more than the drawings of soda-water and effervescing lemonade bottles, and the rows of bottles themselves, could be held apposite appendages to the table of her ante-room. Past these, however, we hurried his royal highness, and on we went. I ran up-stairs as if to announce their arrival; in fact, to pay the admission money. The prince thought that all was properly prepared, and followed without demur. The entrance to the drawing-room was certainly somewhat of the strangest; but he passed it, nothing doubting, or at least nothing saying. The blaze of lights within, and the number of living and moving figures intermingled with those of wax, aided the deception, although they were not exactly such either in garb or appearance as were likely to frequent the chambers of kings; but we hurried him through the glittering moving scene to the group which represents the coronation of our gracious sovereign, William the Fourth. "There — there is the king him-

self!" said I; "make your obeisance there:" and the poor bewildered prince was in the act of making the *serferoo*, or usual bow made to royalty, when I stopped him. It was enough; to have gone further would have been inexcusable: and his brothers, who had remained behind, now coming up, and laughing, a full explanation took place, which at first he hardly knew how to receive; but at length, after good-humouredly abusing me for the trick, he laughed with the rest, and began to examine the show, which he had been so unexpectedly cheated into seeing.

It was then a re-acting of the morning scene; but his astonishment at the figure of Madame Tussaud was past all control: like his brothers, he started at seeing the spectacles so immoveably fixed on the old nose, and, after eyeing it humorously for a while, he walked round it in a semicircle, like a magpie round a trap, as if still expecting it to move. "It *is* a living thing," said he at last; "but no, it has no motion. *To khodah*—what is it?" and going very gingerly up to it, he put forth his hand and touched the cheek; then retreating, "It *is* wax," said he, and was

going away as if satisfied apparently: but a lingering doubt, which, however, he was ashamed to betray, brought him slyly back, as we went on; and, on turning, we saw him go up with a more determined air, and take hold of the little finger: "*Belli*—yes," said he, on seeing himself detected, "it really is wax." All the people in the room had clustered around us while this scene was going on, and their amusement at the poor prince's uncertainty was excessive.

At length the show was over,—all had been admired; we regained our carriage and drove to Kensington, where we arrived, just in proper time, at the true palace. The princes were received at the top of the staircase by Sir John Conroy and Sir Gore Ousely, and conducted at once into the room where sat her royal highness the Duchess of Kent, and the Princess Victoria, with a brilliant company already assembled. The princes were most graciously received; and to the hopes that were kindly expressed, of their having found their stay in England agreeable, the elder replied by declaring himself for ever grateful for all the kindness they had met with; but added, that it was now only he was sensible

how long he had been in darkness, since his eyes had only now received the light. Several times in the course of the evening did their royal highnesses come forward and address to the princes some kind remark; and it was very gratifying to myself, as to the rest of their friends, to observe that the impression they made in this august assembly was, as in other companies, highly favourable.

Among their acquaintance who were present was Lord D. who came up and talked a good deal to their royal highnesses. "Ask him," said his lordship to me, and speaking o Timour Meerza,—"ask him what he thinks of that lady," pointing out a young and high-born lady, certainly of great personal attractions; but her beauty was not to the taste of the blunt and matter-of-fact Timour, who answered with a twist of his mouth, "That lady? not much, she has no *salt*."—"Well, then," said his lordship, "ask him what he thinks of my cousin here?" Now, knowing the Persian taste, and that here also an unfavourable reply might be expected, although the lady to all English eyes was a very lovely person, I hinted the connec-

tion; upon which he said in English, and assuming a knowing look, "Ah! very purty, very purty lady, indeed;—but where *you* lady? you no got lady? very bad, very bad." His lordship, not being able to deny the charge of celibacy, observed, that he had not yet sought out a wife. "Ah, then," said Timour, earnestly, "why don't you do so? By your head! lose no time about it; *Jan-e-mun!* (my soul!) the life of man is not long enough to put off such matters. In the name of God, get a wife to-morrow, and ask me to be your guest, and I will come and judge of your choice." A great deal passed in this strain with others of the party; and after a while the princes took their leave, warmly impressed with the very kind and gracious reception they had experienced.

On the way home we called in at a party which the princes had been strongly solicited to honour with their presence. But they had seen enough for one day, and, though they did go, it went against the grain; so that, though the lady of the house, a most amiable and agreeable person, did what she could to amuse them, it would not do; they were sadly flat, nor did

they meet with any of their acquaintances to raise their exhausted spirits. There was not on the part of the company, however, any want of interest, and the same eternal string of questions were again and again put and replied to. At length two ladies came up to take the field: neither were much to the prince's taste; but he said to me in a listless voice, "Now, for God's sake! make them compliments; do."—"What shall I say, prince?"—"Oh! say that I am charmed to make their acquaintance, that their beauty ravishes me, and that they are full of spirit and animation."—"What, prince?" said I; "where is the use of all these lies? you are not obliged to say anything of this kind, and why tell a bootless lie?"—"You are perfectly right," replied he; "say nothing about it; neither of them are worth a lie."

Next day they had to encounter a different sort of excitement. There are few of our European institutions which allure more the curiosity of Orientals than freemasonry. Its mysterious secrecy excites their imagination, and particularly of those,—a very large portion, especially in Persia,—who are disposed to Soof-

feeism, or freethinking in religious matters. The accounts they have received of the freemasons of Europe, magnified and probably distorted by the channels through which they reach them, dispose them to imagine that to belong to this fraternity is to obtain possession of much mystical and supernatural knowledge which is hid from the uninitiated; and I have seldom known a Persian, of the description alluded to, who did not desire to become a freemason. Our princes were among the number; their friend and countryman the Meerza, himself a mason, at their earnest request, had made the requisite preparations, and this was the day appointed for their initiation. They were greatly excited; the elder, naturally shy, and imbued with a shrinking dread of all indecorous familiarity, had great doubts about the matter. He had been told,—jokingly, I suppose,—that certain personal liberties were taken with neophites, and he declared to me that such he would assuredly resist. "*Wullah!* Saheb Fraser," said he; "if they attempt anything improper, or even suspicious with me, I will use my fists." It appeared, however, that all passed smoothly,

and that they were very happy, for they returned home full half-seas over.

15th July.

The two younger princes went to Lady M.'s party, which was a very splendid one. It was to have been a fête champêtre, and the gardens were to have been illuminated; but, the weather proving unfavourable, the company were forced to remain in the suites of apartments, which were brilliantly fitted up. The crowd was great, and many of their acquaintances were there; so the Wali, who dislikes walking about, ensconced himself on a sofa in a corner behind a table, and began to scribble verses, for which there was speedily a brisk demand. Sheet after sheet of note-paper did he inscribe with a few lines, which were all one after another carried off by Lady This or That; and all had some point included in few words, and taken either from some Oriental poet or from the magazine of his own brain, which was pretty prolific in these productions. They were such as the following: "Your lips are as a cup, and the words that flow from them as the wine thereof: their sweetness is its intoxication, and delights my soul."

My task in translating these was no easy one; nor was that of rendering into English the compliments of the younger by any means less difficult. He was speedily surrounded with damsels who were curious to know how many wives he had, and what he did with them all, &c. &c. and I wish I could recollect some of the pertinent, though somewhat blunt, replies he returned to such inquiries. The compliments of Timour are obviously words of course, not from the heart; but a flash will ever and anon break forth from his eyes, and then one sees by the animation of his countenance that he feels what he utters. On the pictures of two ladies of the family, very charming and attractive persons, being shown to him, one of whom had for some time past been his acquaintance, and being asked whether he thought them like, he replied, "Yes, they are very well, but of what use are they to me? they have no life. Now these," turning to the originals, who were present,—"these can talk and converse with me, and I feel the full delight of their presence."

July 16th.

The princes being invited by Mr. V. S. to a

fish-dinner at Lovegrove's, we drove thither at the appointed time, and found an exceedingly pleasant party of about thirty persons, ladies as well as gentlemen, with many of whom they were acquainted. The room in which we assembled commanded a cheerful prospect of the river, but their royal highnesses derived no satisfaction from that view. "No, no," replied they, when invited to breathe the fresh air at the window; "we shall see the ships there; and we would rather never taste fresh air, if it is to be spoilt by the sight of the water."

When the dinner was announced, each of the three princes advanced boldly to lead off a lady; and it was amusing to observe how characteristically each performed this office. The eldest, courteous and gentlemanly by nature, offered his arm in a style that was neither deficient in grace nor good-breeding. Timour Meerza claimed his companion with that free and independent air which marks every act and gesture,—as a gallant soldier might claim the mistress he had won by deeds of arms. But the Wali, far less remarkable for manner than

his brothers, although in shrewdness and learning their superior, shoved forth his hand, clutched his partner by the arm, and held it as if it had been the handle of a tea-pot or quart mug. "*Wullah!*" said he, as he entered the dining-room, "I am always ashamed to take hold of these ladies."—"And no wonder," replied the Meerza, who was next him, "when you do it in so awkward a way."

The dinner was perfect both in substance and style. Among the good things of the first course was turtle-soup, a delicacy of which they had heard before; but having a prejudice against the animal,—which they call *cassiposh*, or *dish*-covered, in allusion to its shell,—the Wali, next whom I sat, would not begin upon his portion until he should ascertain whether it were the offensive article or not. Timour had not been so cautious, and was already at work upon it with a relish that proved it was agreeable, when he became informed of the fact; on which he observed that it was not good, and sent it away. The elder prince alone kept his plate without remark, except in answer to an inquiry of how he liked it, when he declared it

to be excellent. Lobsters were another of our delicacies which they could not bring themselves to taste; and when, on the first course of fish being put down, the Wali saw himself surrounded by turtle and lobsters, it was ludicrous enough to listen to his half-smothered ejaculations of disappointment. But the good things that succeeded made him ample amends for his first alarm, and the champagne with which he washed it down had its full effect in raising his spirits; indeed they all took wine so freely, that I was seriously alarmed for the consequences. I might have known Sheerauzees better; it was not men accustomed to the Kajers' drinking bouts in that country who were likely to be upset by a few glasses of champagne; they were seasoned vessels. It only made them more ready with their replies to the questions that were invariably poured upon them, and which it required some ingenuity to frame fresh answers to every day. On being asked why they persisted in the abominable custom of locking up and veiling their women, the Wali, with a knowing look at me, replied, "Tell her, we only veil those who are not worth looking at; but

who would ever think of veiling such fair creatures as we see here?"—"Ah! but in Persia you veil every one, and so would you do here if you could."—"And if we did," replied he, "the resplendence of their beauty, like the brightness of the sun, would shine forth through all veils. We have a Persian proverb which says, there are two things which cannot be hid,—transcendent beauty, and true love.—Tell her that," said he, giving me a push in the side, as much as to say, That will surely please her.

One of the ladies observed, that she understood the Wali had been writing verses for all the ladies at Lady M.'s ball. "Yes," said the Wali, "I did give them verses, and some very good things, too."—"Ah! well then I hope you will give me a couplet also?"—"Yes, by all means," replied he; "and it shall be an excellent one. I hear that the house we have met in to-night is called Lovegrove's, that is, the grove of love; and that subject I shall take to write upon for you."

LETTER XII.

July 18.

AMONG the objects which it was believed would be most pleasing to the princes in the vicinity of London, was the Arsenal at Woolwich, and the practice there. Directions had accordingly been issued for exhibiting these to their royal highnesses, and this was the day appointed for the purpose. They were themselves desirous of witnessing a spectacle so much to their taste; yet when I arrived at the hotel, within half an hour of the time for starting, not one of them was out of bed. "Ah!" said the prince, on hearing my voice at his room door, "here is Saheb Fraser, sword in hand, to push us out of our holes; a desperate tyrant he is, that Saheb Fraser!" We started about half-past eight; but they had now begun to be so anxious about commencing their return to Per-

sia, that their heads were full of this the whole way down. I have not thought it worth while to advert to this subject of anxiety; but it had for some time been gaining ground, and was one of the causes of that listlessness and indifference to objects of amusement, which was so striking in their demeanour. No doubt it was natural that they should feel deeply anxious for the welfare of their families, and desirous to rejoin them; but yet one would have thought that finding themselves in the greatest capital in Europe, where so many objects which they might never have another opportunity of beholding were pressed upon their view, they might have made the most of their time; but such was not the case; for, whenever a forenoon party was proposed, they first started difficulties and doubts, and, when these were done away, the reply was, "To speak the truth, Saheb Fraser, I have neither heart nor spirits for these things."

We reached Woolwich, however, and were courteously received by Colonel Cleveland, who forthwith ordered horses, and took us down to see the gun practice, with which the day's work was to commence. I did not think they were

so much struck with the spherical case-shot firing as might have been expected; perhaps they did not quite understand the beauty of it; perhaps it was a small exhibition of the *nil admirari* system, which is considered so essential in the demeanour of great men in Persia. If so, they were surprised out of it by the rocket practice, which was quite new to them, and which gave them great delight.

They were equally so with the battering-train practice, and examined with care and admiration the beautiful construction of the gun-carriages, and the ease with which the gun traversed, and the precision with which it was pointed. They requested permission to lay a gun themselves; but, ignorant of the necessary elevation to be given, they laid it so low that the ball would have struck the ground half-way, and ricochetted over the mark; a thing it was difficult to make them comprehend, even though some of the shots laid by the artillerists at a higher elevation struck short. But what struck them most, as it did all of us, was the firing of the huge gun of twelve-inch bore with hollow shot. To see this devil sending its black

messenger, like an imp of darkness, with great precision and enormous force to a distance of one thousand two hundred yards, and with a roar that almost cracked the drums of our ears, was truly an imposing proof of the extent of human science as directed to the destruction of the human species; it seemed as if the art of projectiles could go no further.

After this display we went through the vast storehouses, where the princes were not a little impressed by the beautiful order, as well as the apparently endless quantity of every article of military appliance and material in its own department. One of the things which struck them most was a set of harness complete, in piles, for ten thousand horses. The bridles hanging from the roof, with the bright curb-chains depending below the rest, resembled an immense quantity of crystal pendents. In fact, one of the princes was deceived by their appearance, and called out, "What! are these *chehel cherághs?*" (chandeliers, or lustres.) On being informed what they were, Timour Meerza eyed them with a keener glance of delight, and exclaimed, "Ah, to be sure! worth a thousand

chehel cherâghs; send them to the ball-rooms, and let me have these."

The laboratory was next examined, and the princes were delighted with the rapidity of work in the cartridge-making department; and particularly with a beautiful invention of Mr. Coffin, the superintendent, for filling them with the most perfect precision and wonderful despatch. They could hardly credit that in the time of war there were seven hundred and twenty thousand ball-cartridges manufactured here every day by twelve hundred boys. The saw-mill and boring apparatus were next examined; and the precision and force of the former, with its facility of application to the minutest as well as the largest work, was viewed with much interest.

The remark of the eldest prince, when he had completed the examination of the stores and laboratory, &c. and had viewed the multitude of guns that lay covering many acres of ground, indicated sufficiently the impression which the display had made upon his mind. "With such means," said he, "and such a *karkhaneh,* (literally, manufactory and its apparatus,) and such a magazine, where is the power

that could go to war with you? There can be none!—it is impossible."

After this exhibition, during which the princes were most kindly and attentively conducted by Colonel Cleveland, the eldest expressed a wish to examine some of the soldiers' apartments and outfit, which was at once complied with. The order and cleanliness of the rooms had their due effect: indeed, I must say, that the two elder princes in particular have at all times evinced a greater desire to see the useful objects of interest in the country, than those which are merely calculated to afford amusement; and the eldest, in particular, appeared constantly on the watch for useful information, as if he still entertained the hope that one day or other he might again be in a position to turn it to account. He asked to look at one of the men's knapsacks, which was immediately opened for his inspection. Astonished at the number of articles it contained, and the compactness with which they were put up, he exclaimed, "*Afereen!* this is equal to a whole Persian house!"

But seeing a Bible and Prayer-book among

other things, and being told what they were, he said, "What has a soldier to do with these?" I was not sorry that he should witness this proof of our regard for our religion,—a point in which, from the little parade we make of it, the Persians think us deficient,—and accordingly I replied, "What, prince! is a soldier then not to fear God?"—"You are right," said he; "it is very proper:" adding in English, "very good, very good."

This concluded the first part of the day's work, and we adjourned to take wine and sandwiches in the mess-room; after which we went to see the mortar practice near the barracks. This was very good; and as they saw the huge shells journeying through the air, and ploughing up the ground close to the flag-staff, they could not contain their excitement and delight. The practice terminated in a salvo of all the mortars, which made a magnificent noise; while the shells looked like a legion of imps hurrying through the air on errands of mischief and death.

The model-house, which they next saw, is a study for days; but we could only afford it a

short and transitory glance. They were delighted at recognising the rock of Gibraltar, where they had called on their way to England, and where the kind attention of its governor, Sir Ralph Woodford, appears to have made a most lasting impression on their minds. They were amused, too, with the model of Russian artillery; but the pile of various old arms in the centre attracted as much notice as anything, for much of the rest was beyond their comprehension. Timour, in particular, was delighted with the old guns and pistols. There were many persons in the place, strangers like ourselves, admitted to view the models; and among them a good many ladies, who all clustered about the princes, attracted by their remarkable dress. "What business have women here?" said Timour: "this is the place for men; let *them* go to the opera!"

One of the most interesting parts of the spectacle yet remained. It had been most considerately arranged, that, in order to gratify their royal highnesses to the full, and to show them what British artillery was, there should be a review in the evening expressly for this

purpose; and we now went to see it. Both the horse and foot artillery were on the ground, and waited their arrival to commence. The princes accompanied Colonel Cleveland along the front, and back between the ranks, and then galloped back to the flag-staff. It was on such occasions that the elder prince felt himself in his own element, and manifested by his bearing and demeanour his innate title to respect and command. You saw that they were familiar to him; his *maintien* was truly princely; and he received the salutes of the troops and their officers, as they marched past, with a courtesy and grace, and yet with a dignity, that could not be surpassed. As the slow pace with which the troops first marched past was exchanged, first for a trot, and then for a gallop, the whole three got highly excited, especially Timour. "Plenty of dust!" observed I to him, as the thick cloud from the plain enveloped us, before passing away with the wind—"Ay," said he; "and so it were the dust of victory, would to God that my throat were full of it!" The capital manœuvring, and the admirably rapid firing, filled them with delight; but there was

one feat which perfectly confounded them. To show the high state of perfection to which the discipline and mechanical address of the men is carried, as well as their practical efficiency, the whole corps halted, dismounted their guns, taking each carriage entirely to pieces, almost in the twinkling of an eye; and remained sitting upon the dismembered heap at ease, for a moment or two. At the word of command, up they rose, put all to rights as rapidly as they had dislocated it, remounted the guns, loaded and commenced firing; and I do believe that scarce forty seconds had elapsed from the beginning of the manœuvre till the firing of the first gun. The princes looked at one another in almost speechless amazement; and the few low bewildered expressions that passed between them were more expressive of their feelings than the most passionate exclamations of applause could have been.

When all was over, there was a general salute, which the prince, as before, received with the grace of a monarch and the air of a practised soldier: and after some warm acknowledgments to Colonel Cleveland, and ex-

pressions of admiration to the officers, we got into our carriage and drove away.

Pleasure, like labour, has its toils; and though the day had been particularly fine, and productive of as much delight as possible, rest was acceptable to us all. Accustomed as the princes, and I may say myself, were to riding, the exertion of some good hard galloping after a considerable period of disuse, and to them particularly, unprovided with their usual riding gear, was not inconsiderable, and our muscles were all a little sore. Yet, when on their horses, they felt themselves at home; and the remembrance of former days excited Timour so much, that he set off more than once at speed, and, drawing his sword, gave the crowd that followed us a small specimen of the Persian cavalry exercise. He ran at his brother, who fled, as was his part; and, when overtaken, threw himself out of the saddle on the other side. "He is off! the prince is off!" cried one of the men. "Not at all; make yourself quite easy," said I, laughing; "you don't know Persian riding: he is only *showing* off; he would pick up a pin from the road at speed, in the

way you saw just now." Accordingly, scarce had the words passed my lips, when the prince was in his seat again, having hung on by the leg all the time; and he laughed heartily when I told him what the soldier had said: as for the man, he looked quite astounded at the thing. When we reached town, I left the princes, resolved to go to bed; where, I dare say, they remained till late, although they had still their dinner to take.

July 21.

The princes having expressed to me a wish to see rather some of our more useful institutions than trivial exhibitions and amusements, which leave little impression, and lead to no improvement, I had procured admissions for them to Bedlam, the Penitentiary, and some of the principal prisons. The first they had desired particularly to see; and, though the day was bad, we went to it this forenoon. I was disappointed in the degree of effect apparently produced by the sight of this excellent establishment; and yet they were decidedly impressed by the remarkable cleanliness and good order which pervade it, and still more so, perhaps,

by the power which the keepers had obviously attained over the patients by mildness, and a kind though firm demeanour. It was this which I principally endeavoured to make them sensible of, and to show that scarcely any severity or restraint beyond that of retaining them within the prescribed limits of the wards or grounds was imposed. The sight, however, of a mad-house is always melancholy and depressing; and though there was little of pain, and much of cheerfulness and comfort, to meet the eye, still there were some cases which were calculated to excite sympathy and commiseration in a more than ordinary degree. Among these were two girls, each obviously of great natural genius and talent, but differing extremely in the tone of their minds, and, consequently, in that of their mental derangement. One, who was something of a poetess, and made verses, was of a serious and sentimental turn; and, had it not been for that distressing wildness and disturbance which the mental distortion imparts to the physical appearance, would have been very pretty and prepossessing. Her address to the prince was strange and affecting.

She questioned him about his belief in God, and his fear of breaking his laws. "Do you believe in God?" said she, looking earnestly in his face.—"*I* do."—"Do you fear God?"—"I do."—"Do you dread to break his commandments?"—"I do." And so she went on, until the housekeeper, fearing probably the effect of too much excitement, told her to cease and go to her room; which the poor thing did at once.

The other, who was also good-looking, although of a wild and excited expression, was flighty and high-spirited, and rattled away at a sad rate. She asked the princes their names, and made some clever remark on each. When the youngest answered that his name was Timour, she quickly replied, "Ah! Timour the Tartar!—well, you are Timour, and I 'm the Tartar,—ain't I?—And what is your name?" addressing the Wali, who stood looking on with a grim smile. "Wali," said he. "Wali! oh, what a name!—strange figure, too!" said she, measuring him with her eyes. "Well, Mr. Wali, I 'll tell you what you 'll do. I 'm going

to get out of this place soon, they can't keep me long; and you shall take me for a nursery governess, and I 'll teach you the tricks of Bedlam."

Among the men, too, there were some interesting objects. Hatfield, who shot at King George the Third, was still in his comfortable apartment, surrounded by his birds and animals, living and stuffed, canaries, parrots, &c.; and, on being told the story, the princes were much struck by the spirit of clemency, (for they could not exactly feel it to be justice,) which had provided for the comforts of one who, even in a state of derangement, had attempted such a crime. There was Martin, too, the incendiary of York cathedral, who was reading his Bible at a table on which were sundry religious books. And there were many dark-looking men,—murderers, it is to be hoped from erring reason,—who are prisoners for life at the expense of the country. At one woman the Persians themselves, though presumed to be well acquainted with horrors, looked half aghast, when they learned that she had cut off the head of a

child; all but the Wali, who, for all his demureness, is the most determined and truculent character of the three,—he who mentioned as rather an indifferent matter his having cut off a sackful of fingers. He looked at her through his glass with much *sang-froid*, and merely asked "*Hameen bood?*—Was that her?"

One very curious case was shown us of a man who, having betrayed a strong disposition to self-destruction, was deprived of all visible means of putting his design in execution; yet he almost attained his object by a process which could not have been pre-supposed. He contrived to set fire to a bench in his cell, and held his head to the burning wood until not only the skin and flesh, but the very skull was charred to a considerable extent. In this state he was found; and medical help being obtained, strange to say, he recovered from the effects of this attempt, but with the loss of a considerable portion of his cranium. What is stranger still is, that although the slightest blow of his defenceless head against the wall would produce death, he now never shows the least disposition to such violence, although it is more,

I believe, than two years since the event took place.

Before the whole survey was completed, the princes were tired of going through the galleries, and begged to return home; yet they were prevailed upon to take a look at a neighbouring establishment for the employment and recovery from evil ways of juvenile culprits. It was a singular proof of the inconsistency of such uneducated minds, that, though fully assenting to the utility of such an institution, and professing particular anxiety for seeing things of the sort, this admirably regulated establishment could not interest them sufficiently to complete an examination of its details, though well worthy of their attention. The thing that engaged Timour's regard the most was the process of making beer in the brewhouse. Nothing, however, could detain him from his favourite haunt at the gunmaker's, at whose shop he insisted on making a long halt on our return. He had the evening before accompanied Mr. Tatham to try a gun, which was in process of being made for him; and proved its goodness and his own dexterity by making a

capital shot at a pigeon which was accidentally flying past, and which he almost cut to pieces in the air. He would be quite at home at the Red-house, which sporting establishment I must try to show him.

LETTER XIII.

THIS day the princes received from Mr. Colnaghi, by desire of her royal highness the Duchess of Kent, a print of her royal highness and of the Princess Victoria; and the elder prince immediately set to work to write some lines which might be transmitted in a letter of thanks for this gracious attention. In the evening he displayed them to us, and was in ecstasies with his performance. "Nothing," said he, "ever was or will be written like them. Nothing so happy was ever produced. They are truly admirable!"—"What!" said I, "are they equal to the verses of Hafiz, or to those of the Moollah of Roum?"—"To speak the truth," replied the prince gravely, "they are quite so. Indeed, I remember nothing in the Moollah's works equal to them."—"These gentlemen know how to blow their own trumpet

well," observed I to the Meerza, who was present. He explained to them the meaning of the English proverb, adding, that such would be the remark men would make here, did they hear what his royal highness had said; but without mentioning that I had applied it. "*Belli*—well," said the prince; "but yet it is the truth, and why should I not say it?" In fact, such boasting is common to all Persians, especially authors of poetical or literary compositions, and held nowise disreputable in that country. It is the common way of talking, and is regarded merely as the expression of an opinion.

Afterwards we went to an evening party, at old Lady C.'s; it was small: they found several of their friends here, and soon were at home. The elder prince monopolized a lady to whom he had taken a mighty fancy; and the Wali was listless and dull till awakened by the arrival of Mrs. L. S., whose place was afterwards filled by Miss H. V.: with the latter he was in raptures, and his expressions grew so warm, and his compliments so direct, that I dared not translate all he said; and this he quickly found out,

and abused me for it. Upon some question regarding music arising, Miss H. V. inquired whether the Wali was fond of it; on which he replied earnestly, "Tell the lady that the music which she made for me the other night at Sir J. H.'s still remains in my ears, as the effect of her beauty does, and always will do, in my heart." There was always something laughable in the manner of the Wali's compliments, although the matter was often neat and well-expressed: he would impart his conceit to the person interpreting for him as earnestly as if it were an argument brought forward in a court of justice, seizing hold of an arm to give it weight; and then would look you in the face with a strange chuckle, as if he had delivered himself of a mighty good thing. Timour fluttered about from belle to belle, but the pretty and lively Miss R. was his chief object of attraction. I had a hard time of it between them all, and could not help observing that I never again should find myself so much in request. The only rest I had was when a singular artiste was exhibiting his performance, which was that of imitating all manner of birds and animals: he

was blind and dumb, if I mistake not, yet his imitative powers were amazing; he contrived to mimic a whole farm-yard at once.

When the evening was drawing to a close, and the hour of supper or refreshment had arrived, the old lady took the hand of the Wali, who was standing with Timour Meerza near her, and put it on the arm of a very beautiful girl, motioning that he should lead her down stairs; she then took that of Timour, but instead of presenting him, as he expected, to his friend Miss R. who was also close by, she drew it through her own most venerable arm, and walked off with him. The sight of his countenance at this arrangement would have been worth any money to an artist in search of a subject. "Eh-eh!" said he, after his comical blank look had a little gone off; "my luck is high to-night: see, Wali, see how I am off! Burn the old lady! what made her fix upon me?" The age of our hostess was then mentioned to the Wali by his partner; upon which he gave a grunt of mingled astonishment and mirth, and then told the following story, which he requested

me to translate for the benefit of his fair companion.

"In the time of Huzrut Moossa (the prophet Moses)," said he, "there was an old woman, a widow, whose years exceeded a hundred, and she had been long dumb from very age; but she still insisted on guiding her family, and kept all her children, who amounted to forty or fifty, locked up in cages in her house, so that they could not go out and enjoy themselves. Weary, at length, of their confinement, they applied to Moses, and besought him to pray to God to have their old mother removed, that they might have their turn of enjoyment. 'That can be done,' replied Moses; 'but say, shall I not rather offer her the choice of another husband?' The children scoffed at this idea; but the old woman, in whose presence this passed, got into a furious passion, and her tongue, which had been still for years, got into play at the very mention of another husband. 'You wretched wretches!' she exclaimed, 'would you interfere with the favour of the prophet of God towards me, and prevent me from enjoying the good he offers?'"

Next day the princes went, by appointment, to Kensington, and had an interview with his royal highness the Duke of Sussex, by whom they were most kindly received. His royal highness took occasion to mention, in flattering terms, the interest their royal highnesses had excited in England, and even in the highest quarters; and expressed his assurance that, though matters of etiquette prevented their being received in a public manner at court, they would find everywhere the greatest possible desire to promote their legitimate views, and to provide for their comfort. In proof of the good disposition towards them of even the most distinguished personages of this country, his royal highness instanced the fact of her majesty having given them the meeting in the castle at Windsor; a step which, though apparently accidental, had, he could assure them, been contrived on purpose to gratify them. The princes, in reply, acknowledged most gratefully their sense of this and every other kindness they had received since their arrival on English ground; and protested that they had nothing more at heart than to have the power, at some future

day, of evincing the sincerity of that gratitude. The conversation then turned naturally upon their future prospects, and purposed return to Baghdad; and the prince did not lose the opportunity to express emphatically the strong aversion which they all felt to a return by sea. To this his royal highness replied by expressing his conviction that, if any other convenient mode for returning could be pointed out, no violence would be put upon their feelings by seeking to induce them to do what appeared to them so disagreeable.

His royal highness was still suffering a degree of confinement in consequence of the operation on his eyes. This circumstance afforded grounds for a good story at the princes' expense. It was put about in town that, when informed of the state of his royal highness's eyes, they had replied, "Ah! it is very well for you to tell us that the Shah's brother's eyes are in a bad state, and have had an operation performed upon them: we know well enough what that operation was; he was *yaghee*, (rebellious,) and the king ordered him to be blinded; it is the way with us at home." Like the story of their being stripped

by Wullee Khan, it has but one fault; there is no truth in it.

From the palace we went direct to the house of Sir James South, where the princes had been invited, in hopes of getting a peep at something or other through his large telescope, and seeing, perhaps, the stars at noon-day: but the weather proved utterly unfavourable, and there fell one of the heaviest pelts of rain I ever saw in any country; it actually deluged the place for the time. The only thing we caught was a glimpse at the spots on the sun's face, just before the shower came on; and we took our leave, proposing to return again in the evening. In this, too, however, we were doomed to be disappointed. We did go, to be sure; but so little is it possible to make these Orientals comprehend the value of time and exactness, that the promised music of the spheres itself would not have induced them to keep their appointment. We were just about half an hour too late for what we wanted; yet we did get a beautiful view of the moon and of Saturn, and of some fine double stars. They were much interested with all they saw, but I scarcely think so much

so as to induce them to make a like exertion again; but they were most grateful to Sir James South, who, with infinite patience and good-nature, exerted himself to satisfy their curiosity, and took a great deal of trouble.

July 22.—The princes went to-day, at the kind invitation of the chairman of the court of directors, to see the India-house and its curiosities, and were received by that gentleman with the greatest courtesy and attention. They viewed the museum, and were amused by some of the Indian relics; but were far more interested by the library, where they got hold of some fine Persian MSS. They could not conceal their astonishment at hearing that there were three thousand of these manuscripts, the most of them very valuable. "What news is this?" said the prince. "Where could these have come from, Wali? the late Shah himself had not such a collection." The great picture, which represents the Shah and his sons in a hunting party, murdering all sorts of game in the most cool and truculent manner imaginable, was the thing that pleased them next best; for there they could discover all their uncles as well as their father,—

handsome beardless youths at the time it was done, — and amuse themselves by tracing the fancied likenesses.

After spending a considerable time in the library, the party, which had been increased by the addition of several ladies and other gentlemen, adjourned to partake of an excellent lunch which was provided below stairs.

In the evening they went to a very pleasant party, at the house of Mrs. R., where Timour Meerza entered into a violent flirtation with the young lady of the house, whom he had several times before met, and whom he now declared he had taken as his wife; and there were some giving of flowers, and other little gallantries, which all passed off very well. A question then arose as to the truth of the assertion, that in Eastern countries different flowers have meanings respectively assigned to them, through which an intercourse could be maintained by parties sending each other nosegays. The younger prince replied, certainly that such was the case. "You agree," said he, "that such a flower represents the letter *aleph*, such another *bé*, and so on; so that the person to whom the nosegay is sent shall

be able to read any sentence you may choose to compose, as for instance, 'I die for you.'"—"Well then," said Miss R. in reply to this somewhat prosaic explanation of a favourite poetical idea; "but what would this flower mean in the East?" showing a blood-red carnation. "Oh!" said Timour, "it would mean that when you present it to me, my face will blush to the same colour." "No," said the elder prince, to whom the same question was put by another lady; "it would mean that my heart has become *kebaub* (roast meat),—that it burns, in fact, for you." As for the Wali, whether it was that he was sulky at having his own original favourite, for such had Miss R. been at first, seduced from him by his younger brother, I cannot say; but he remained sitting all night apart in the ante-room, writing verses, and talking to a gentleman who was versed in the Oriental languages, with whom he held some long and learned discussions.

On the 23rd of July the princes partook of the splendid dinner given by the East India Company to Lord Elphinstone, on his going out as governor to Madras. It was a very magnificent affair; upwards of an hundred and fifty persons, I believe,

sat down to dinner; and the company included the greater number of the ministers of the crown, and many of the most distinguished of the nobility of the country, besides the directors and chief officers of the great body which provided the feast. There was abundance of every delicacy, fine music, and everything that can heighten the pomp and attractions of such an entertainment; yet the princes did not enjoy it, and for this there were many reasons. In the first place, wherever they had dined hitherto they had seen themselves the chief objects of attention; they felt and enjoyed an importance which they had, from their youth upwards, been accustomed to: here, from the nature of the entertainment, such could not be the case; they found themselves in the assembling-rooms mingled with a crowd of people of whom they knew few or none, and who, though civil and good-humoured, did not make objects of them. The occasion was one of a public and official nature, where consequently official rank necessarily took precedence of those who had no public character to support; and thus, of necessity, the places assigned to them at table were low: this they

felt severely. Finally, they understood not, and could enter into nothing of what was going on; and, even though each had an interpreter at his elbow, it was impossible to convey to them the spirit of what was passing.

To add to their discomfort, the Wali, who had been out of order all day, got worse at dinner, and was forced to leave the room with the interpreter Assad, and to go home to his hotel. Thus, from first to last, matters went wrong; and, in spite of the satisfaction they derived from a very kind interview and conversation with Lord P., who on all occasions treated them with a consideration and goodness which called forth their never-ceasing acknowledgments, they left the feast-chamber discontented and out of humour.

The fact is, that these unfortunate princes, whatever they may say or imagine, have not yet brought their minds to the level of their fallen state; and, from being in misfortune, they are the more jealous of any diminution in the observances of respect to which they have been accustomed, and which they regard as due to their birth. "We have lost everything," said

the prince to me afterwards, in talking of this affair; "we have neither country, nor sway, nor followers, nor property; all that is gone, nothing is left us but our *shazadehgee*, — our princely birth; of that they could not deprive us, nor can we divest ourselves of it if we would." Thus, though, in fact, reduced to the condition of private persons, and acknowledging themselves to be so, they stand upon their rank of birth, and cannot sink the prince; they have no idea of the incognito which is often assumed by royalty in Europe; and, even if they do for a while lay aside their high pretensions, they are disgusted if they find them disregarded. The prince attacked me violently next morning for permitting such an indignity to be offered him. I endeavoured to show him the unreasonableness of this charge, by explaining to him the difference between appearing in a public and a private character: that he must be sensible that in all private parties there was no need to stickle for a precedence which was always most readily granted to himself and his brothers; but that on public occasions, public men must, as a matter of course, take their due and legitimate places,

and that all persons invested with merely private characters must give way,—it was a case of necessity, not of choice: and that, where the intention was good, it was scarcely gracious to quarrel with his friends for not performing impossibilities.

But even this did not satisfy the prince. "If they could not give me a suitable place," said he, "they should not have asked me, and you should not have let me go. *I* had no wish to go; I only went at your suggestion." "Prince," said I, "let us cut this matter short. The object of those who invited you, like mine, was your amusement; we thought you would like to see a large and splendid public dinner. The intention, as I said before, was good. They could not calculate upon feelings which they saw no cause for the existence of. If you don't like such parties, you need go to no more of them; but don't blame me hereafter if you find yourself neglected from a fear of offending your fastidiousness. I think you are unreasonable, but I will not say one word more on the subject." And I did say no more, but let him talk on and exhaust himself. This soon

brought him up; and he ended his harangue by saying, "Well, remember this is all between ourselves; let it go no further."—"By all means," replied I; and the subject was dropped.

The fact is, that the *row* made on this occasion by the prince originated partly in a genuine soreness of feeling, and partly from those motives of policy and self-importance which are constantly stimulating Persian courtiers to skirmishes on points of etiquette and precedence. But to a certain extent the prince was right; the place to be assigned to him should have been explained to him, and he should have had the choice of going, or not going, conceded to him in proper time.

LETTER XIV.

July 26.—This day the princes enjoyed a great treat; their friend, Sir G. O., who had left town, invited them to go and spend a day in the country, at his beautiful place near Beaconsfield. We reached this charming residence after a pleasant and beautiful drive, in a morning just such as we might have chosen for the purpose had we had the choice; and greatly did the poor princes, who were heartily sick of London, rejoice at getting rid, even for a few hours, of its noise, and its rattle, and its dust, and bad air. Nor could there be a more delightful contrast to all they had left behind than was furnished by the scenes to which they had come: such lawns, such grassy slopes, such velvet terraces, such forests of evergreens, such magnificent yew hedges, such woods and noble old trees, with fine long vistas, and temples, and carving in

old grey stone, and points of view with seats to sit and gaze from! It was a happy union of the old and modern style of pleasure-ground; but so extensive! so much under shears and scythe, and yet in such good taste! nothing prim nor finical: in fact, the fine old timber and noble growth of wood were of themselves sufficient to impart an air of magnificence to the whole. Nor was the house unworthy of the place: a large and handsome addition had been made to the old building; giving, besides a capital dining-room, drawing-room, and saloon, twelve fine large spare bed-rooms. All these were most beautifully and tastefully furnished; and composed, on the whole, a most admirably convenient and comfortable, as well as spacious, family residence.

At the door of this mansion the princes were received by its master and mistress, who conducted them to the drawing-room; but after a very short while we all found ourselves strolling about upon the beautiful lawn and pleasure-grounds behind the house. Here Timour ran and skipped about like a young kid, chasing the little pheasant chicks that were feeding about, and trying to catch them as they flew in the air;

he was absolutely wild with spirits. The elder prince enjoyed himself more soberly. As for the poor Wali, we had left him in town recovering from his indisposition, which had turned out to be a severe bilious attack. From the time of his arrival it was impossible to prevent him from indulging in his Persian habits of eating all manner of trash, quantities of raw cucumbers, green fruit, and other indigestible substances, which, when in the course of daily exercise, might be productive of no ill consequence, but which, confined as he was by indolence almost to his room, could not fail of producing disorder.

After strolling about for some time through the extensive and beautiful grounds, we returned to the house, where a rich feast for the princes was found in Sir G.'s collection of Persian MSS. and other valuable curiosities from the East; but so inveterate is habit, that the elder prince could not get over the whole forenoon without retiring, according to custom, for a few hours' sleep before dinner. After a most handsome entertainment, and a very pleasant evening, we returned to London.

It was at this time that I received official in-

timation that my charge of the princes was not intended to cease with their stay in England, but that I should be required to accompany them on their land journey homeward, probably as far as the Turkish capital. This I had foreseen, and was prepared to expect. The inveterate and ineradicable horror which they had imbibed for the sea, had, on all occasions, been so strongly expressed, that, however more desirable and convenient it might have been to forward their royal highnesses by ship to the point of the Mediterranean nearest to their purposed route, the idea had been abandoned as unnecessarily cruel and inhospitable; and it was resolved to comply with their wishes, and forward them overland in as much comfort as the nature of the journey admitted of. But, strangers as both they and their interpreter Assad Khayat (who still remained with, and was to accompany them,) were to the mode of travelling and the customs of the Continent, it became absolutely necessary to intrust them to the charge of some one who might conduct them safely to a point in their journey where they should be able to shift for themselves, and I was pitched upon to perform this

duty. That it would be no light charge I had good cause to anticipate, for I had had already sufficient experience of their being, with all their good qualities, little else than great spoilt children, wayward and capricious, as much from habit and education, as from utter ignorance of the world; and I prepared myself for the endurance of much absurdity and vexation, resolved to oppose all obliquities of conduct by a steady perseverance in what I saw right, tempered with an indulgent forbearance towards all innocent fancies, however fantastical, where such could be safely permitted. I knew that the elder prince had a kind heart, and much good sense and propriety of feeling when not perverted by some inherent prejudice or momentary impulse; and I trusted to the influence which he possessed over his brothers to control their eccentricities or occasional errors of conduct. In fact, I had become deeply interested in these almost homeless wanderers, as I cannot help being in all that belongs to their country; and felt a strong desire to see them put at least into the way of rejoining their families. At this time it was understood that their departure would take place on an

early day, and our preparations accordingly commenced. Circumstances, as you know, occurred to delay our journey for a considerable time longer.

The London season was now over, and the town thinning rapidly. Many of the princes' friends and acquaintances had departed; and, though there was no want of invitations or parties, their indolence appeared increased, and they went out less than before. What they loved was a quiet dinner with a few friends; and if this dinner was at the hotel where they lived, and where they felt under no constraint, and could do as they pleased, it was so much the better. The unfettered and even capricious freedom of their own habits of life, so different in many respects from stricter formalities of English society, was what they delighted in when alone. They took their meals when they were hungry, not when the victuals were ready, nor at any fixed hour, — an irregularity which was sadly discomfiting to the *artiste* at Mivart's, who did not know what to prepare, or when to have it cooked; nay, sometimes at midnight one of them, who perhaps had not been hungry at dinner-time, feeling a craving, would rouse the

house to get him something to eat. Then they took whims for particular things, plentiful and common enough in Persia, but which were not always at hand; and thus unintentionally gave a great deal of trouble, which I must say was most good-humouredly borne by all the servants of the hotel. In fact, the affability and gentle manners of the elder prince, and the good-natured thoughtless freedom of the third, had won the hearts of the household, and made them great favourites at Mivart's; as for the Wali, he was inoffensive at least, for more than half his hours were spent in sleep.

The remarkable thing is, that none of these eccentricities, no *gaucherie* or vulgarism, ever appeared in society; there they seemed intuitively to seize the tone of those with whom they associated, and to do as they saw others do, with a facility which was sufficient to excite surprise. They never made any mistakes of consequence; and handled their knives, forks, and glasses as if they had done so from their youth upwards; and comported themselves with a decorum which it would have been difficult to find fault with. Nor was the readiness with which

they adopted the taste for European cookery, less remarkable: this is so different from that of the East, that the change, it might have been conceived, would be disagreeable to them; but so little was this the case, that, when asked what dishes they preferred, the reply usually was, "Oh! anything; just what you English eat." There were, however, exceptions: some dishes they would not eat; two have been mentioned already,—turtle and lobsters. To these at first was added oysters; and, in fact, their aversion seemed to extend to all shell-fish with one exception, and that, strange enough to say, was shrimps. To these, or something of the sort, they had been accustomed in the south of Fars, and Timour especially was very fond of them.

To turtle and lobsters they obstinately maintained their antipathy, refusing to taste them, although mock-turtle soup was one of their favourite dishes; but one day, as a dish of nice scolloped oysters was put on the table at Mivart's, I pressed Timour Meerza to taste a little bit. He confessed that the dish looked very well, and smelt very well; and after a queer imploring look at his brothers, and a glance of irre-

solution at the morsel, he put it in his mouth. His countenance betrayed that the taste was not displeasing; he asked for another morsel—swallowed it—and then desired the whole shell to be sent to him. This he gobbled up without a word; and then, turning to his brother, said, "*Dadâish*, by your head, it is capital! what fools we have been! Saheb Fraser, pray order that a dish of these same oysters be set down at table every day we dine here. *Ajaib-cheezee ust!*—a wonderful sort of thing it is!" In fact, after this, he ate so much of them, that they were, I do believe, a principal cause of a sharp illness which he had soon after.

Another dish of which they became very fond was a preparation of cream, under the name of *Charlotte Russe*. The Wali, in particular, was a great admirer of it, and ate, as he always did when he got what he liked, to excess, making all the time puns and bon-môts in Persian on the sweetness and fairness of his favourite dish as compared with the living Charlottes of his acquaintance. Still, after they had been for some time in London, they began to long for some of their Persian fare; and, as

one of their servants was a cook, by the assistance of Mr. Mivart's *artiste* the matter was easily managed, and pillaws of various sorts, and sundry stews, *mutenjâns, fizenjans, moosommahs, cookoos,* and vegetables *à-la-mode de Perse,* made their appearance at their table. That same *artiste* of Mr. Mivart's, if he had the true gastronomic genius, must have got some good hints for new dishes; for though the Persian cookery deals much in butter, and may be too greasy for many palates, it has points that by proper modification could not fail being turned to good advantage.

To all other motives for desiring their departure, increasing *ennui* was added. The mornings of the princes were spent in listless idleness, dwelling on the subjects of anxiety connected with their peculiar situation, and unable to rouse themselves to use the ample means of diversion and amusement in their power. The Wali slept away much of his time, as usual. The elder prince wrote his journal, or lounged away in his room; and Timour would either repair to his dear gunshop, or sit drawing strange figures, and making copies of

prints, in which native genius was singularly contrasted with the effect of want of practice. Their chief recreation was a gossip over the way at Mr. Partridge's, where their picture was going on capitally, and they had made themselves quite at home; or a ride or drive in the Park towards dinner-time, horses being furnished them from Mr. Allen's riding-school. In the evenings they sometimes went out to parties; and occasionally to Vauxhall, Astley's, or the theatre: but as little occurred at the first beyond the same round of questions, compliments, and answers; and the novelty of the spectacles had worn off, leaving no room for original remark, I need not trouble you with a journal of such trifles: in fact I cannot, for, as they furnished nothing worth recording, I took no note of them; perhaps you may think the same of much that I have told you.

During this period of dulness and *ennui* it was a charity in any friend to visit them; and I made it a point to be regular in my attendance, even when I could do little to comfort them. But it was often extremely distressing to witness the low spirits of the elder prince. Every

time I entered the room their countenances would brighten up, as they sat in various listless attitudes; and "Ah! here is Saheb Fraser, with good news, I see; come, tell us what it is," was the constant address. But Saheb Fraser had too often no good news to tell; and it was painful to mark the fall of their countenances when my own blank visage, and the "*Hanoze heech khubber na darum*—As yet I have no news," met their eyes and their ears.

"Fraser Saheb," would the prince say with earnestness, "is it true that you have no news,—that you really know nothing?—is all going well? What then is the cause of delay? *Eh-Wahi!* If you had wives and children, as we have, that you had not seen for more than a year, you would know what we feel:—and it is on me that all this comes; I must think for these two brothers of mine,—mine is all the anxiety. *Ai Wahi! Ai Wahi!* this uncertainty is death. I am tired of this London, I can't breathe in it; I am choked—my heart is bursting! If I but knew we were to be two months here, or a year, we would make up our minds, and get some little place in the country

where we might walk and ride about; but here! — *Wullah Billah!* Saheb Fraser, we shall die if we stay here:—see! we are all ill already."

It was in vain that I reasoned with him, and besought him to have patience; reminded him that at the moment there were a multitude of grave affairs before government; and that if they desired to give their friends fair scope to act for them, and to have their business well and completely done, they must not attempt to hurry matters. But they were like a child which frets itself into illness because it cannot immediately obtain the toy it has set its heart on: It was always, "if we but knew when; if we could but be certain!" The Wali, believing that I knew more than I chose to say, sometimes attempted to surprise me into a confession. "I have a ring, Saheb Fraser, which I wish to have made," said he to me one day; "but the jeweller tells me it will take a fortnight to finish. Shall I give it him? What is your advice? Shall we have time?" I smiled, and told him he knew as much as I did, and must use his own discretion. When I recommended them to go out and take the air, and amuse

themselves with the ample means in their power, the answer was still the same: "By your own death! we have neither heart nor spirits for it; we can enjoy nothing; our minds are sad, and our hearts are away." And then they would tell me of dreams, in which they saw their wives and children, and were united to their families, and all was joy; and they were relating their adventures, and all they had suffered for their sakes. Alas! I knew too well what this sort of feeling is, for I had experienced it; and how could I always parry with success their earnest appeals, or rebuke their despondency too severely?

I did my best to comfort them, however; and often, in talking of their own country, would the prince lose remembrance of his griefs for a time, and become animated with the recollections of former days. He would describe with complacency his own mode of life, and pour out a number of anecdotes which, could I have set them down as he narrated them, would have amused you, as they did me.

One day we had been talking of early rising, and I was upbraiding them with their indo-

lence and departure from their Oriental habits. "Ah!" replied he, "you are right; in Persia it was otherwise. The Persians rise early, you know they do; and so did we,—there was no laziness when we were there. In the morning, Saheb Fraser, we used always to get up before day, as you are aware, to morning prayers; and, if there were a mosque near, we repaired to it to say our *Numâz;* if not, we performed them at home. This, if properly gone through, would occupy three hours: not the *Numâz* alone, for that may be got over in a few minutes; but there are prayers that should be said, and readings, and meditations. Ah! by your death, prayers are a serious affair with some! All men do not go through the whole of this, it is true, for many a prayer is but a form; but those who are truly religious make a point of it. Well! after this, I used generally to go to the *Zór-khaneh,* (or place for gymnastic exercises,) where I went through my athletics, and exercised myself for an hour and a half; and because, as you know, we perform all these without any clothes except a pair of drawers, and perspire violently, I then washed, perhaps

bathed, combed my head and beard, and then dressed.

" Then I used to go to the *Dur-khaneh* (literally, gate of the palace—ante-room) of the Firmaun Firmaee, (his father,) who, being informed of my arrival, would send for and converse with me upon matters of business, instruct me on what was to be done, what collections to be made, the troops or *gholaums* to be disposed of and despatched; for, to say the truth, I was the efficient person,—*Ism ba wó bood,—Resm ba mun*; the name of authority was with him, the exercise of it with me. Then in came the rest of the princes; after a while the pillaws, and down we all sat to breakfast. After breakfast we all went home; and then, Saheb Fraser, I used to retire to my *anderoon*, and sleep, perhaps, until the afternoon. Then, when I came out again, there were my own affairs to attend to, or perhaps we went out and took a ride; and, after returning, I sat in public, and transacted business until the hour of dinner. Then came the hour of enjoyment with my brothers or cousins; or perhaps I went into my harem, and had my women to serve me and amuse me.

Ah! Saheb Fraser, the time went merrily by: *ai Wahi! ai Wahi!* And then," continued he, " there were our hunting parties and our pleasure parties: ah! Irân is the place for these; and, of all Irân, what is there like to Fars! Ah! what a *Mamleket* (country)!—what water, what air! — what verdure, what fruits! — And then, for game,—*Penah bur Khoda!*—the mountain partridges are thicker than sparrows, and the deer are like flocks of sheep! — but, Saheb Fraser, it needs a *man* to take them, — ay, and a horse too. Ah, what horses we had! they did not run, they flew; there were no horses in Irân or Arabistan like ours! The Shah, you know, got his best horses from us, and we took care to keep a few to ourselves: my father, the Firmaun Firmaee, had twelve thousand brood-mares in his pastures;—think of that, Saheb Fraser! twelve thousand mares!

" Well! away we used to go to some of the plains that were full of deer,—perhaps, with five hundred good horsemen; and our people would find us out some pleasant place where there was shelter and plenty of grass: and, when we came home with our game, there would we

sit, and cut up the deer with our own hands, and make such kebaubs!—And as for wine,—ah! you know the wine of Sheerauz,—and we had the best of it, to be sure: for each of us there was never less than two *jöüingees* (glass bottles holding at least half a gallon a-piece); and we thought nothing of him who should leave a drop of that; ay, and a good bottle of *arrak* (spirits) to boot, perhaps; and we had champagne and madeira also, from Busheer. Ah! those were the days of enjoyment!"

At another time he would describe to me the habits and customs of the Shah with his family, when they were assembled around him; and, from the great number of his children and grand-children, it was seldom that he had not such a family party. "There is always," said he, "a large ante-room beyond that in which the Shah sits, when he comes from the women's apartments; it is called the *Tumbel-khaneh*, or lounging-room, because all those in waiting here lounged and lolled at their ease: and there was a certain lady, one of his majesty's wives, named Sumbool Khânum, who had charge of it, and was therefore called

Malikeh-e-Tumbel-khaneh, or mistress of the lounging-room. Here all the princes used to assemble until the king made his appearance in the chamber of reception and of eating. Here too is the haunt of the *Gholaum-batchehs,* or pages, who are always full of mischief, with their demure countenances, and delight to play tricks on the princes who come here,—such as stealing their slippers, hiding their cloaks, and so on,—knowing that there is little fear of detection or punishment.

"The king, when he issued forth, used to utter a loud *Yah ullah!* which was well known to us all; and his majesty was always preceded by six peishkhidmuts carrying silver candlesticks, and attended by a crowd of menials of all sorts. His majesty then walked gravely to the high corner or place of state, where it was his wont to sit; took his place with becoming gravity, repeatedly stroking his fine long black beard, while muttering his religious sentences, and perhaps taking a single long whiff of his *callecoon.* After a while the cloth was laid upon the carpet, and the trays of silver and gold, covered with shawls and

gold brocade, filled with all sorts of pillaws and good things, which first had, according to custom, been paraded in the *Tumbel-khaneh*, were borne in by the peishkhidmuts in due order, and arranged in seemly fashion under the directions of the same lady of the *Tumbel-khaneh*. This duty of the peishkhidmuts is by no means so simple or easy as you might think, for there is a prescribed mode of presenting the dishes and trays to great men, which must not be deviated from ; and a peishkhidmut is considered to be a master of his business exactly in so far as he executes these duties of etiquette in a perfect or imperfect manner. He must hold the *douree*, or tray, straight out in his arms ; and, kneeling down, must place it on the *sofra* (cloth) exactly in the prescribed position, without permitting it to decline at all from the horizontal, so that nothing may be spilled : and, as these trays are often very heavy, you may imagine that it is not every one who can perform the duty with grace and with correctness. I remember a laughable accident, connected with this duty, which happened at Sheerauz, in the presence of my late

father, the Firmaun Firmaee. An entertainment had been given to his royal highness by a Moollah of that place, and great preparations had been made for it. The hour had arrived; the Firmaun Firmaee had taken his seat, the cloth was spread, the candles ranged in order, and nothing remained wanting but the food. It is the custom, when a private individual entertains a prince, that he brings in the first dish or tray himself, and sets it before his guest. Now the Moollah was old and little, and on this occasion the tray was large and heavily loaded with good things; but bring it in he would, and in the proper style too. So in he walked, half-hid behind his great *douree*, and advanced with all due solemnity to the upper end of the room, where sat the Firmaun Firmaee. '*Afereen, afereen!* bravo, bravo!' said my father as the old man approached; but, before he reached the place, the weight became too much for him, the tray began to totter, and finding it going, yet resolved not to relinquish his hold, he called out, 'Ai Firmaun Firmaee! ai Firmaun Firmaee! help, help! or it will all be over upon you;' upon

which, my father, who saw what was coming, jumped up like a deer, and caught the tray so cleverly, that not a thing was spilt between them: they set it down safely, and a hearty laugh we all had at the affair, in spite of our respect for my father; but the poor Moollah was sadly ashamed and out of countenance.

"But there was a still more ludicrous occurrence happened in the presence of several of the princes who were entertained by a friend of mine. He was a Khan of high rank, and prided himself upon the excellence and good arrangement of his establishment. His head peishkhidmut was a very respectable man, and a most important personage, with a beard almost as long as that of Futeh Allee Shah himself. In bringing in the dinner, this peishkhidmut carried the tray that was to be placed before the elder princes; and as he advanced, and knelt down to set it on the cloth, one of the candles, which had been wrong placed, and which his burthen prevented him from seeing, set his fine beard in a blaze. What was to be done? Throw down the tray, he could not; that would have ruined his character for ever:

and yet, to place his burthen on the cloth with due decorum, with his beard burning all the time, how was that to be managed? There was a large bowl of *mâs*, or sour milk, in the tray, for eating with the pillaws and vegetables; and into this, with admirable presence of mind, by a motion of his head he dipped his flaming beard at the same time he set down the dish; and, recovering himself, stood up in the proper attitude of respect, with the *mâs* streaming from his chin. All burst out into a laugh, but the man stood perfectly grave and unmoved; and the elder prince exclaimed, '*Afereen, afereen!* well done, well done, such a one! your face is white this day. By your head! Khan, that man deserves a khelut, and a khelut he shall have.' It was a capital scene I assure you.

"Well, Saheb Fraser, when the dinner is all duly set forth, the Shah, after washing his hands in a golden basin, with water poured from a jewelled ewer, and wiping them with a gold embroidered handkerchief, would utter a loud *Bismillah!* (grace,) and begin to dip his fingers into the good things, first into this dish

and then into that; and after making trial, as it were, to ascertain what was best, he would ask, 'Where are the princes? let them come in.' In a moment all the princes would start up at this, and, as if it were Devil take the hindmost! repair with their utmost speed to their proper places at the cloth. These were all known. Abbas Meerza, when present, as first in rank, would sit next his majesty, but yet with a space between. When he was absent, the Firmaun Firmaee, or Hassan Allee Meerza, his brother, would take that place; and the rest in succession, according to age and rank, to the amount often of an hundred or more. When all were standing duly and respectfully in their places, another signal from his majesty would make them sit down, which was always done with the greatest ceremony and decorum, each keeping his eye reverently turned on the 'centre of the universe.' During this time his majesty would continue still picking a bit, until, all being in order, he would look up and give a nod, as much as to say, 'Fall to!' on which in a moment every man's hand was in the dish next him; with which he

was forced to content himself, for there was no stretching or scrambling before the king. But here the lady of the *Tumbel-khaneh* would come to their assistance, and happy were those who were well with her; for her duty at this period of the business was to stalk up and down upon the *sofra* or cloth, clad in 'tights,' so that her garments should not interfere with the dishes, and with a wand of office resembling a shoe to help those who required it. And there used to be, I assure you, no small manœuvring to catch this lady's eye, in order to procure through her means a share of some tit-bit or favourite pillaw. This lady was never without her favourites, and could always do them a good turn, by placing near their station an extraordinary portion of good things; whereas those who had the misfortune to offend her had often to content themselves with a little sour milk and bread.

"In the mean time a number of the Shah's women used to enter, each making the salam, and ranging themselves like statues in mute and moveless silence round the hall, every eye turned to the lord of all this state. Some

favourite lady of late years, oftenest the *Taje-u-Dowlut*, would be called to sit behind the king, embracing his body while he was eating, patting and caressing him with her hands crossed upon his breast. With one of these his majesty would often play, and sometimes with her neck; at other times he would amuse himself by cramming large handfuls, made up of all sorts of eatables, into her mouth, over his own shoulder. To do justice to these was no easy matter, for the Shah's *lougmch*, or handful, was one of the largest in his dominions; and the poor *Taje-u-Dowlut* used often to complain of them." I asked the prince here, whether all this went on before this huge assembly of sons, grandsons, and menials of all sorts; to which he replied by assuring me that it did,—that it was the usual custom.

"Well, Saheb Fraser," continued he, "the princes all this time would eat in perfect silence, not daring to utter a word to one another; the Shah would speak occasionally to the eldest prince at his side, but that was all. After a certain time, which custom had fixed, this eldest prince, whoever he might be, would

give a sort of signal to those near him, who always rose at once, whether they had finished eating or not, and none could continue sitting after this: up they must get; were their hand in the choicest dish, or their fingers on the sweetest morsel, left it must be; and all, bowing profoundly, must leave the presence, holding, as best they might, their greasy unwashen paws, — for there is no washing before the king, but in the ante-chamber there are always a parcel of the king's women in waiting with basins and ewers, for the purposes of ablution after meals.

"The king would often continue picking and eating for half an hour after the princes went, for he was a great feeder; and, dinner being concluded, he would smoke a *caleeoon*, and rising with another great *Ya ullah!* retire, as he came, to his anderoon, where, getting his women about him, he would remain for some time. Frequently he used to send for some of the princes again, who in that case sat down with him, and spoke when they were spoken to, while the favourite ladies still continued to be present. Then it was often his majesty's

custom to send for cards, at which he played with the princes, contriving always to win. It was a rule on such occasions, that, whatever money was staked, ten per cent. of it went as a *droit* to the king, who used to put it in a large vessel of green agate, in the shape of a duck with an opening in its belly. Thus, independant of the bets he always made, and which his opponents were too good courtiers to win, by frequent changing from one hand to another, the coin must all, sooner or later, go into the maw of this voracious duck; and then, when his majesty had cleaned them all out,—some losing two hundred tomauns, others five hundred, and some a thousand,—the old gentleman would crow over them; and, shaking and weighing this same duck in his hands, would exclaim with a loud chuckle, 'Aha! the king's bird has been fortunate to-night, it has gained a grand victory; *Mashallah!* the king's luck is high!' and then off would all the poor fellows go with their fingers in their mouths, leaving his majesty highly contented with his plunder." I was but too happy when I could beguile the princes into gossip such as this,

which made many a dull hour slip by; and were my memory more perfect than it is, or had I at all times been able to note down what passed at such times, I might have made up a very pretty volume of "Persiana."

Time, however, did not stand still; nor did their business, although it might not progress with a rapidity commensurate to their wishes. On the 3rd of August their royal highnesses had the honour of a private audience with his majesty; an attention which was as deeply felt as it was graciously and kindly vouchsafed. Nothing, indeed, could be more gracious than their reception, or more gratifying to the princes than the assurances which were given by the royal lips, of the interest which his majesty took in the welfare of personages who had so frankly put their trust in the royal generosity and protection: while, on the other hand, the elder prince repeated to his majesty, in person, those expressions of gratitude which he felt, and had often before expressed, for the kindness and hospitality they had already experienced; a kindness which had commenced, he declared, from the

first moment they had felt themselves under protection of the British flag, at Gibraltar, and which was now perfected in the happiness which they derived from the sight of his majesty's august countenance. It was an omen of a happy future, — a proof that all their misfortunes were at an end; and that, *Inshallah!* through the continued favour of his majesty, everything hereafter should go well with them. I need not add that they left the presence highly delighted with their audience.

LETTER XV.

AMONG the excursions which the princes made at this time, there was none they more enjoyed than a visit to Hayleybury College. Accompanied by Meerza I. we drove down to that gentleman's house, close to the college; where, like birds uncaged, they ran wild about the garden, falling upon the green apples with the eagerness of children, nor could all my remonstrances prevent them from gormandizing a quantity which I felt certain must make them ill. The Wali and Timour Meerza, collecting a parcel of large apples, set to work; and, bruising them till they burst, filled the cracks with pepper and salt and parsley-seed, and so devoured them raw: after such feats the good Wali wonders that he is ill, and complains of the climate and air of London as the cause!

Proceeding to the college, they were received by the principal, and most of the professors, together with the ladies of their families, among whom their quick eyes failed not to discover some "very pooty" individuals, according to their newly acquired English phrase, which, truth to say, they have learned to enunciate very prettily. "Ah, very pooty!" "Ha' d'ee do?" and "I hope you are qvite well," were now made use of when introduced to any new acquaintance; and the last especially, often whether applicable or not: nor did they spare their stock of English on the present occasion.

After coffee and liqueurs we adjourned to see the college; but the fine walk in front of it, and the fine Eastern MSS. in the library, were the only objects that had much attraction for them until dinner, which was served early, in order to admit of their returning in good time to town. A capital dinner it was, and healths were drunk in good wine and good style, so that everything went on most pleasantly; and, after a cup of coffee at the Meerza's, we got into the carriage, and drove comfortably home. But so much are

these singular creatures dependent on excitement, and so apt, when that is wanting, to fall into gloomy reveries, that, even in the short interval between the termination of dinner and our arrival in London, they felt the uneasiness of exhaustion consequent on their exertion; and, when we stopped half-way to change horses, requested a few glasses of wine to wind them up again.

Another excursion, and it was among their last, was to Richmond, where we enjoyed a stroll in the park, and an excellent dinner at the Star and Garter. It was pleasant to see them letting themselves freely out, and, casting their cares away for a while, opening their hearts to the influences of the delicious day and the exquisite scene around them. The two younger played at the jereed with sticks they picked up in the park, to the great amusement of many lookers-on; and Timour scampered away like one of the deer around him. We were not the only party in the hotel; and after dinner Timour insisted on taking part with a juvenile troop, who, in high spirits, were playing a miniature game of cricket

in the garden before our windows. He rather spoilt their game, I believe; but, on the whole, I suspect the little fellows were better amused than if the interruption had not taken place.

On the whole, the day passed off with much success; and it was gratifying to see that they appreciated the charms of certainly one of the loveliest places in England.

Among the few other "sights" which they had an opportunity of seeing was the prorogation of parliament, which took place on the 20th of August. Everything possible was done for their accommodation, but to get them places in the part of the House of Lords appropriated to foreign ambassadors was not practicable; so that the eldest, fearful of being placed again in what he considered a position degrading to his rank, declined going altogether. The two younger went, and got places in one of the little stalls appropriated to the eldest sons of the nobility, where, contrary to the usages of the place, stools were given them to sit upon; yet, after all, even Timour Meerza asked me, with an upbraiding look, whether this was a place suited to their rank, and whether, in other circumstances,

I should have considered even *these* (looking at the gentlemen around him) as fit companions for him. I mention this to show how inveterately was this phantom fear of lowering their dignity engraved on their minds, and how much it often did, of necessity, interfere with their comfort. It often prevented them from witnessing what was interesting or agreeable, and cramped the motions of the eldest in particular so much, that he did not profit to a fourth of the extent he might, in the advantages to have been derived from his visit to England.

Both of the princes, on this occasion, took notice, with somewhat of a jealous expression, though veiled with a smile, of the preference given to the ladies, in point of accommodation and comfort, even over persons of the highest rank; and indeed the benches immediately above the bar were fully and fairly occupied. But I must do them all the justice to say, that greatly as our customs with regard to women differ from theirs, and strong as is the contrast between the position occupied by females in society here and in Persia, they never appeared to regard the ladies here as usurping a place beyond their

sphere, nor to entertain an idea of slight or disrespect towards them; on the contrary, they seemed to enter with remarkable readiness into our notions on these subjects, and adopt at once our feelings and our conduct towards the fair sex. Often did they hold forth to me upon the superiority of our ladies over theirs in education, and usefulness, and intellect; nor do I think that this strain, though possibly exaggerated after the Oriental fashion to gratify my national tastes, was by any means entirely assumed for that purpose. I believe, on the contrary, that they felt the superiority which they admitted, but could not fully comprehend; and that even if in a few individual cases they may have been surprised by a certain *étourderie*, or over frankness of manner, they quitted England with a high respect and admiration for our fair countrywomen in general, and strongly impressed with their grace, their affability, their accomplishments, and, above all, their virtue, and modest yet dignified demeanour.

As for the ceremony of the prorogation itself I do not know whether it made a strong impression or not, although the appearance of the

peers in their robes, and the pomp of the royal entry, were certainly not lost upon them; but Timour was mightily tickled with some parts and attributes of the ceremony, especially with the Lord Chancellor's wig, and those of the Speaker and clerks. He could not at all comprehend what might be the meaning of the ceaseless repetition of the words used in giving the royal assent to the various and numerous bills passed during the session; and the rush of the commons on their entry to hear the King's speech astonished and confounded them both, as well it might.

At length the arrangements of which their business and position were the object, were completed; a few official forms alone remained, and it became necessary to prepare for their journey. One of those preparations was to send off by sea certain of their servants who could not accompany them by land. The journey, both as a matter of expediency and to comply with their own wishes, was to be performed with all convenient speed; and, as some parts of it lay through countries where posting is difficult and horses scarce, it was an object to reduce the

number of carriages as much as possible. It was therefore arranged that the princes and their interpréter should occupy one four-seated carriage, while myself and the rest of the party proceeded in another, with one Persian and one European servant; the latter being a man well acquainted with travelling in the countries through which we had to pass.

One of the greatest plagues the princes had been teased with during their stay in London, was their Persian servants. They had been of little use; and, being constrained by no feelings of dignity or self-respect, had got into bad habits, and more than once into scrapes. At length, first one, and then the other, declared they would not leave London, to go wandering about, or return back to Persia or Arabia. London was a very good place, they said; and there they should remain. Now, one of these worthies was by trade a tailor, the other a cook; and their habits were as different as their professions. Tuckey, the cook, loved the English ale; beer was rather too weak for his stomach; and of this favourite beverage he took so much and so constantly that there were few

days in which he was not fuddled: how then could he quit dear London and its good liquor? The tailor, on the other hand, was a man for the ladies,—fond of the fair sex, although certainly his gloomy countenance and coarse figure would not, *à priori,* have seemed likely to captivate many of them: *he,* however, was not the less susceptible; and, having found some kind dame or dames to listen to his sighs, how could he leave London and its fair ones? He declared he would not: that he had entered into engagements with a master of his own craft, by which he was to get board, lodging, and good wages; what further and secret articles there might be, he was too good a politician to let out; but in London he took his stand. As for the cook, he stood by the ale; he had made no treaty,—entered into no articles but with his own stomach; but these were sufficient, he was equally obstinate. Time at length pressed, and the two recusants were ordered up to the presence; but both were found equally resolute in their determination,—give them a thousand tomauns apiece, go they would not. The princes were infinitely embarrassed; they did not like

to leave the men: what were the foolish creatures to do when they came to their senses, and found themselves adrift and helpless in a strange land? Besides, it would affect their own good name. They knew full well the tricks of their countrymen; these fellows would tell lies, and say that they, the princes, had brought them to England for their own convenience, and then turned them adrift to starve. The idea of such a slander was not to be endured. The affair had been canvassed long before, and my advice had been, that they should let the fellows go and shift for themselves; that when their money was gone, and they had no longer the hotel to fall back upon for food and shelter, they would be too glad to return and cry *Tôvah!* (I have sinned; forgive me!) But the prince had not enough of firmness to follow this advice; he feared they would get into scrapes, and that his name would be unpleasantly and degradingly brought into notice. The men, therefore, went on in their ways, and this was the result. I told them the affair must be decided by the next morning, as the men must start by noon in order to be in time for the next Mediterranean

packet; and the princes, together with the Meerza, had a stout night of expostulation and entreaty; their royal highnesses weakly expecting to succeed by the last with men who were reckless and headstrong, or had a point to gain, when more decided language had failed of effect. That night I was told, "all was right," they would go; the next morning, that "all was wrong," they would not go. Then, next, they were like buckets in a well,—when one was on, the other went off; and so the time was wasted till the hour had almost come. I told them now or never was the moment: time, tide, and steam waited for no man. I then found that money was the cry,—pay them their wages, and they would go. The princes wished to comply with the demand, and I produced the money. "Take it," said I to them, "if that is what you want, and then get into the coach which is at the door." So to it they went again,—princes, followers, and the poor Meerza, who had a sad time of it between the two parties. As for me, I merely stood aloof, watch in hand, to call "time!" At length all appeared to be settled,—I believe a bribe had

been resorted to; and sulkily and slowly did the fellows go to get their "traps," and I accompanied the tailor upstairs to quicken his motions, and for fear of his slipping through my fingers. Having seen his things thrown into the coach, and himself getting after them, I ran back to look after the cook. He had eloped, and was nowhere to be found. All the house was searched, but no Tuckey. "I dare say he is in the kitchen, sir," said one of the waiters; "I'll go and see." I followed to rouse him out, when, in threading a long passage on the way, I heard the brogue of dear Irân in a whining and growling key, and soon after recognised the voice of the Meerza remonstrating with some one. It was with the unlucky cook, who we believed had gone to collect his things, but who had quietly gone to the bath-room to take a warm bath, while we were cooling our heels upstairs; and the Meerza, by mere accident, in the course of his search had found him stripped and stepping in. My patience, both from feeling and on principle, was at an end, and I let Master Tuckey see it. I was fortunately able to deal him out

a good dose of his own country's delightful abuse, which I enforced with several emphatic shakes by the neck, and something very nearly approaching to a kick or two. Tuckey saw it would not do; so he gave up the bath and dressed, grumbling and *aé! Moossulmaun*-ing it, seemingly quite astounded, but also quite convinced, by this demonstration of English vigour. But I did not lose sight of him; he had his things yet to get, and up I went with him to the garret. On the way he bolted from me into the prince's room, where he began roaring and bewailing himself, and fell at the feet of the elder, lamenting his hard fate in being separated from the master whom, not ten minutes before, he had insisted obstinately and insolently upon quitting. "He was torn away from him,—from his dear master," he said. "God knew if he should ever see him more. You go by land," said he; "I, *kumbucht!*—unlucky dog! must go by water. You go to Constantinople, I to Falmouth! Where is the one, and where the other? *Ai Wahi! ai Wahi!*" and so he went on, blubbering and kissing the prince's feet, till I was forced once

more to interfere, declaring that there was not time for such displays. A little more "*douce violence*," however, was required to get him upon his legs, and I led him out of the room staggering and reeling, as much I think from drink as from grief; and then I had another scene upstairs, where, when he arrived, instead of at once bundling up his things, he threw himself down on the bed in a passion of tears.

At length I got him down stairs, guarding well the door of the room where the princes sat. But not so was he to pass the door of the sanctum within which sat the good Miss M——, who assailed him with much misplaced kindness, and tendered him what he liked far better — a large bumper of rum. Tuckey blubbered and drank; it soothed his deep distress: he shook hands with his late companions, gave another howl of distress, and entered the coach. When I got there, my other bird had fled. The buckets in the well again! Not daring to leave my prize, I begged the Meerza to go for the stray bird, who at length was caught: the door closed upon them; and, after giving the servant who was

to accompany them strict charge not to let them out until he took them on board the Falmouth steamer, I had the satisfaction to see them drive off.

Perhaps you may imagine that now the affair was terminated: not at all. In two hours after, when I returned to the hotel, I found all in confusion again. The tailor had returned on our hands, and the packet had doubtless sailed without him. Here was a pretty business! From his account it appeared that, when he had got down nearly to the vessel, he had missed a cloak, or something, and turned back to get it. It was no easy matter to discover who was in fault; nor was the doubt cleared up by the arrival of the servant, who swore that the man, when he attempted to stop him from getting out, got furious, and even drew his knife upon him; so what could *he* do? — and what had I left to do but to abuse the man, and swear that he should pay the tailor's fare to Falmouth, whither of course he must be sent with all speed by that evening's mail? But this was managed by the party at Mivart's themselves, for I declared

I would have nothing more to do with the matter, — the man might go, or stay, for me. He was sent, however; and so the business ended.

And now "all was accomplished," the carriages prepared and packed, the — whole arrangements complete, when lo! Timour Meerza, who had yet to pay the price of his childish excesses in diet, like the Wali, and who had been for some days a little out of order, was seized violently ill, and thus did the journey experience a further delay. Even the Wali himself was by no means in high health; so that, when the convalescence of the former permitted us to start, it was still held prudent, if not necessary, to make two days' work, instead of one, of the road to Dovor. At length, the 3rd of September was finally fixed upon as the day for our departure; and, after an early and hasty breakfast, the carriages came to the door. The leave-taking was, I assure you, a scene fit for a novel. During a sojourn of nearly three months, the good-humour, affability, and kindheartedness of their royal highnesses had gained them the hearts of every one in the

excellent hotel where they resided, in spite of all whims and trouble: even the whole neighbourhood felt an interest in persons whose exits and entrances, and foreign customs and dress, had so often called them to their windows; and their departure created a sensation not very usual in any part of London, and especially at a hotel which is constantly filled with comers and goers of distinction. Several of their friends too, even at so early an hour, had come to bid "God speed" them; so that among the crowd which had assembled both in doors and out, and even at the windows of the houses around, there were many that took a sincere interest in the occasion. Within, there was no end to the embracing and shaking of hands; the ladies were in tears, — almost in hysterics; the princes, between excitement and sympathy, almost as bad. Who can leave even the prison where he has passed many days, without casting a look of feeling behind him! "Who can say the word 'adieu!' without emotion, or look unmoved, for the last time, at familiar scenes!" says somebody, or something like it. The princes could not: they were dying

to leave London, — to return to their families, — but they had been happy there; they were weary even of their handsome lodgings, — but they had experienced kindness in them, spent some happy hours; and as for the ladies of the establishment, — there was something more than mere acquaintance to break off: in short, they were very tender-hearted, and it was a most moving business. But all things must have an end: the last hand was shaken; the last — no, perhaps not *last* tear shed; with difficulty we forced our way through the crowd that thickened round the carriages. In got the princes, — the door was shut, — Adieu! adieu! and away we went down Bond-street, along Piccadilly, by Regent-street, for the last time. "Ai London! Ai London!" said the prince, more than once, as he looked his last at its superb streets and shops, which he might never again behold; but the whips cracked, — the posters sprang forward, — Westminster Bridge was passed, and London left behind us.

As for me, my first thought was of thankfulness that at length we had made our start; for, according to the common saying, "a thing

well begun is half ended." My next, was a recollection of the last time I travelled this road, and a rapid mental comparison of the circumstances of that occasion with those of the present: how busy had been the interval! — how many changes had it produced! How vain to speculate upon the distant future, when even over the events of a year — of a day, — no one possesses the smallest control!

Well, — on we drove: in due time we changed horses at Dartford, and in a gloomy, unlovely afternoon reached Sittingbourne, where capital accommodations and an excellent dinner, at the George Inn, made us all comfortable, and prepared even the invalids for their next day's easy journey.

Next morning, after a good breakfast, we started, with an air rendered delicious by a heavy fall of rain in the night, for Canterbury. Of this prettily-situated town, however, we saw little, as we only drove into the hotel-yard, and, changing horses, drove out of it again, and right on to Dovor.—Dovor! rendered interesting to me by so many recollections, who could have guessed when, but fifteen months

before, I reached thee after so many wanderings, that in so short a time I should revisit thee with such a charge, and on such an errand?

We put up at the Ship Inn, where it was immediately obvious that the price of our accommodations was to be measured by our rank rather than their excellence, and that we were to pay at least "*en prince;*" for our bill was far higher than at the George on the preceding evening, though there we had far better rooms, food, and attendance: in fact, the charges were higher than at Mivart's. No wonder that foreigners of rank complain of their first reception in this respect on English ground, when even the natives cannot escape.

We were informed that the packet was to sail either at five in the morning, or at three the next day, and resolved to regulate ourselves by the weather, which was not altogether promising. Poor Wali! The windows of the apartment looked out upon the sea; and he sat gazing at it, suffering by anticipation all the misery which he dreaded on the passage. Had there been a possibility, by any sacrifice of toil or time, to get out of England by land, he

would not have scrupled at consenting to make it. During one of the last conversations held upon the subject,—I forget in whose presence, —when the plan of a sea voyage was again discussed, and its advantages set forward, the Wali, to whom I was explaining what had been said, cut me short: "Your words are useless," said he; "the truth is this,—no force will make me go by sea. Were it a question of walking with naked feet among thorns for a thousand fursungs, I would do it; but go by sea, I will not!" But the Wali had learned to look at maps, and he knew that England being an island, there was no way but one to get out of it to the Continent; and so he had to make up his mind to cross from Dovor to Calais, being the shortest passage to be found. But even of this he talked with a horror which moved certainly as much of contempt as of pity. The rest, although almost, if not quite equal sufferers with him, said less; and, I believe, thought less about it. Still all hated the sea; and the stormy look of the evening, as the night came on, was but poor comfort to them.

Sept. 5th.

It blew a gale all night, and therefore no packet sailed, and the people came to tell us this at four in the morning; so, instead of the satisfaction of rising in a cold raw morning by candle-light, we had just the trouble of going to sleep again, which we did most successfully achieve, and lay till eight, by which time the weather had much improved. Yet the sea still looked black enough, and seemed to reflect its colour on the poor Wali, who lay curled up in a knot in a corner of the sofa, covered with his black abba. As the sun broke out, however, he unwreathed himself, but looked just like a child going to take physic. He asked me whether there were berths in the packet for people to lie down upon the moment they got on board, and plenty of *basins*. I eased his mind on those heads by promising him a berth, and telling him that he should have half a dozen basins at his command, if he thought his case would require it. The day passed heavily enough; for, though some of the party walked about, the princes moped in their chamber till the time of sailing, which, in spite of their

anticipated sufferings, they were impatient for.

It appeared, however, that they were not to leave England at last without a parting tribute of interest and regard; for, when the hour of embarkation came, the whole pier was crowded with spectators, and they received the warm adieus of several friends whom chance had brought to Dovor at the time. At a few minutes after three we went on board; but so lazy was the tide, that it was half-past four before the vessel floated and we could get out of the harbour. The wind was fresh, and, together with the run of the tide, kicked up a sharp sea. The elder prince sat on deck for some time rather triumphantly; but, when he began to feel affected by the motion, he rose, and staggered along the deck to his carriage, where, according to the captain's advice, he took up his position. The Wali had at once taken up a recumbent berth, and Timour Meerza soon followed his example. Others also retired to their carriages, leaving the deck to those who had none, or who dreaded the miseries of the cabin more than exposure above.

Some laid themselves down on cloaks and sails, in hopes of escaping the enemy by assuming that lowly posture; but a row of heads over the lee gunwale, like a string of beads, soon proclaimed his power upon deck, as the sounds of woe and the numerous basins that ascended from the cabin did below. These sights and sounds, most ticklish to a ticklish stomach, were to be seen in every part of the vessel; for, though she behaved beautifully, the passage was a rough one. The condition of one poor young creature of high rank and great beauty made my very heart sore. There she lay, stretched in the after-cabin, like some beautiful piece of sculpture, still, and pale as death, till some heavy swell or other cause brought on a fiercer paroxysm of the deadly sickness, and forced her to spring up with a cry, and to commence a tearing fit of retching. Alas! to no effect. I saw another lady, after braving it long, led like a ghost down to the cabin, unable to drag one leg after another; in short, it was a miserable business, as usual. "These be thy triumphs, sea!" thought I, as I viewed the prostrate and sorely harassed multitude:

"what wonder is it that the poor princes dread thy very sight!" The interpreter was worse, if possible, than they; he shouted and roared, and ejaculated for mercy in all languages, I believe, in the agony of his sufferings. The rest of the party managed better; and I, considering my tendency in these latter days to succumb to the enemy, stood it out more stoutly than I expected. In fine, after two and a half or three hours of bitter misery, we were duly ejected from our aquatic prison upon the quay of Calais, and soon well lodged in Monsieur Dessein's most comfortable hotel.

At first all hands professed that they required nothing in the way of food, nothing but rest—that to eat was out of the question; but after our stomachs had settled for an hour, we contrived to get down a pretty satisfactory meal. The princes took theirs in their chamber, where they got hot water and lemons, and a variety of trash, and made an extraordinary mess.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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